

1508/782

The STRANGER;

OR,

MISANTHROPY AND REPENTANCE:

A DRAMA,

IN FIVE ACTS.

FAITHFULLY TRANSLATED, ENTIRE, FROM THE GERMAN OF

AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE,

DIRECTOR OF THE IMPERIAL THEATRE AT VIENNA;

BY

GEORGE PAPENDICK,

SUB-LIBRARIAN TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE
OF WALES.

Who by Repentance is not satisfied
Is nor of Heaven nor Earth.

Shakespeare

THE FOURTH EDITION

L O N D O N:

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The PUBLISHER to the READER.

THIS celebrated Drama of KOTZEBUE is now for the first time submitted in an entire state to the Public. A few particulars respecting the present Translation, however, may not be thought improper.

About five years ago Mr. Papendick, sub-librarian to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, being abroad, perused and admired the interesting play of MISANTHROPY AND REPENTANCE, and conceived that he should render a service to the English Stage by translating, and transmitting it thither for performance. He did so accordingly. It was sent over to his brother in London, and soon after offered to Mr. Harris, the Patentee of Covent Garden Theatre, in whose hands it remained about three weeks; at the end of which time it was returned, with an intimation, that it was not suited to an English Theatre. The Manuscript was then entrusted to the care of a literary friend, with a view to its publication. In that gentleman's possession it remained, till after the first performance in Drury Lane. The brother of Mr. Papendick then applied to his friend, and received back the manuscript *in statu quo prius*.

As, however, the introduction of M. KOTZEBUE's Drama into England had certainly originated with Mr. Papendick, it appeared to his brother as a sort of injustice to withhold his translation from the world. Sensible, nevertheless, that, as the work of a foreigner not thoroughly acquainted with the genius of the English language, the Manuscript must require revision, a gentleman*, who was presumed to be competently skilled in English composition, was engaged to prepare it for the press; but though from his hand it appears before the Public with some advantages in point of diction, the Reader may rely on its being an *accurate* and *complete* translation from the original, and the only one yet published with any such pretensions.

From the Play as performed at Drury Lane Theatre it differs little, except in the following particulars: that a song and a dance have been introduced in the performance; and many retrenchments made, to reduce the time of action, which in the original very much exceeds what is usually allowed on the English stage.

Strand, May 9, 1798.

* Mr. Stephen Jones.

Persons of the Drama.

M E N.

MEINAU (*the Stranger.*)
COUNT WINTERSEE.
BARON HORST.
BITTERMAN, *the Count's Butler.*
PETER, *his Son.*
JOHN, *Servant to Meinau.*
WILLIAM, *Meinau's Son.*
TOBY, *a distressed old Man.*

W O M E N.

EULALIA (*disguised under the name of Mrs.
MILLER.*)
COUNTESS WINTERSEE.
EMILIA, *Eulalia's Infant Daughter.*
BETTY, *the Countess's Waiting Maid.*

SCENE *at a Castle near a Village in Germany.*





THE STRANGER;
OR,
MISANTHROPY *and* REPENTANCE;
A DRAMA.

~~~~~

ACT I.

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SCENE I.

[*A rural Spot. In the Back Ground a poor Hut half concealed between Trees.*]

PETER enters, running in pursuit of a Butterfly, which after some time he catches in his hat, and then says :

A H A ! have I caught you ? Well, it is a vastly pretty one indeed ; all red and blue and yellow and—[*Pins it to his hat*]—Gad, I am a clever lad after all, though my father always calls me stupid : Yes, stupid Peter ! Now as it happens Peter is not stupid at all. He has ornamented his hat so prettily, that every Cottage girl's heart will jump at the sight of him. Then father always pretends to be so wise, and will have it that he knows every thing better than me. Sometimes I talk too much, and sometimes too little ; and if I ever speak to myself he calls me a fool ; though in truth I like to talk to myself, because I understand myself best : and then I never laugh at myself, as others are very apt to do. That

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laughing

laughing at people is a horrid provoking custom: yet when Mrs. Miller laughs at me I can easily put up with it; she does draw up her mouth so sweetly and so prettily, that one would think she were sucking a sugar-sop [*Is going, but returns.*] Look'ye there now! if I had not almost forgotten why I came hither: and then they would have laughed at me again [*Draws out a purse.*] This money am I to carry to old Toby; and Mrs. Miller has desired me not to say one word about where it came from: As for that, she may make herself perfectly easy. I know very well how to keep a secret.

S C E N E II.

The STRANGER, JOHN, and PETER.

[*The Stranger, with folded arms, and head reclined, seeing Peter, stops, and regards him with an eye of suspicion. Peter stands opposite, with a vacant stare; at length takes off his hat, bows awkwardly, and withdraws into the hut.*]

STRANGER. Who is that fellow?

JOHN. The Steward's son.

STRANGER. From the castle?

JOHN. Yes.

STRANGER. [*After a pause.*] You were speaking last night——

JOHN. Of that poor Cottager.

STRANGER. Right.

JOHN. But you gave me no answer, Sir.

STRANGER. Well, proceed.

JOHN. He is very poor.

STRANGER. How do you know that?

JOHN. He says so.

STRANGER. [*Sarcastically.*] Oh, people say and complain much.

JOHN. And deceive much?

STRANGER. Even so.

JOHN. But this man does not deceive.



STRANGER. What assurance have you of that?

JOHN. 'Tis easier to feel than express it.

STRANGER. Fool!

JOHN. The fool with humane feelings is better than the icy-cold repulsive sceptic.

STRANGER. You are mistaken.

JOHN. Benevolence excites gratitude.

STRANGER. You are wrong.

JOHN. And charitable gifts bless more the donor than the receiver.

STRANGER. You are right.

JOHN. You are a benevolent gentleman.

STRANGER. I!

JOHN. These eyes have witnessed it a hundred times.

STRANGER. A benevolent man is a fool.

JOHN. Oh, surely not.

STRANGER. Men deserve not our benevolence.

JOHN. True, many men do not.

STRANGER. They dissemble.

JOHN. They deceive.

STRANGER. They weep to your face.

JOHN. And laugh when your back is turned.

STRANGER. 'Tis a detestable race. [*With bitterness.*]

JOHN. But there are exceptions.

STRANGER. Where will you find one?

JOHN. In this Cottager.

STRANGER. Did he complain to you?

JOHN. He did.

STRANGER. Hah! Real distress utters no complaint.

[*Pauses.*] What did he say?

JOHN. His only son has been taken from him.

STRANGER. By whom?

JOHN. By the Prince, to be a soldier.

STRANGER. Fy! Fy!

JOHN. The poor old man is starving.

STRANGER. Shameful!

JOHN. Lies ill, and unattended.

STRANGER. Well, I cannot help him.

THE STRANGER:

JOHN. You could, Sir.

STRANGER. How?

JOHN. With money to purchase his son's discharge.

STRANGER. I will see the old man myself.

JOHN. I pray you do, Sir.

STRANGER. But if he lie—

JOHN. He does not lie.

STRANGER. Men are born liars.

JOHN. Too true, indeed.

STRANGER. In that hut, did you say?

JOHN. In that hut. [Stranger enters the hut.]

SCENE III.

JOHN.

A good master he is; but by living with him one almost forgets the use of speech. I do not know what to make of him. He seems to hate the sight of mankind; yet poverty never passes his door unrelieved. I have lived with him now these three years, yet know not who he is. That he is a misanthrope is very evident; but, my life on't, Nature never designed him for one. The hatred of mankind runs indeed in his head, but has not reached his heart.

SCENE IV.

JOHN, STRANGER and PETER from the Hut.

PETER. Nay, pray, Sir, do you go first.

STRANGER. Fool.

JOHN. So soon returned, Sir.

STRANGER. What should I do there?

JOHN. Did you not find it as I said?

STRANGER. This lad I found.

JOHN. What business had he there?

STRANGER. Oh, the old man and he are confederates in the scheme. How would they have laughed in their sleeves had they made me their dupe!

JOHN. It cannot be.

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STRANGER. What had this lad to do with the old man?

JOHN. [*Shrugging and smiling.*] Let us hear. Pray, young gentleman, what was your business in that hut?

PETER. Nothing.

JOHN. Why, you can't have gone there for nothing.

PETER. Why not? I tell you I did go for nothing: Who would not be ashamed to require payment for every thing they do? When Mrs. Miller does but look kindly on me, I run for nothing, ay, and about nothing, up to the eyes in mud sometimes.

JOHN. Oh, then Mrs. Miller sent you, did she?

PETER. Why, yes; but one does not like to pop such things out all at once.

JOHN. Why so?

PETER. Because Mrs. Miller said to me, Mr. Peter, pray be so good as to say nothing [*much pleased*] Mr. Peter, pray be so good—he! he! he!—and when she called me so, I felt just as if I had been tickled by a pretty rosy-cheeked country lass.

JOHN. Oh, that is another affair, to be sure; then certainly you must be very secret.

PETER. Yes, and so I am too. So I told old Toby, you see, that he would never know that Mrs. Miller sent him the money; for that he might assure himself he never should hear it from me.

JOHN. How cautious you were! But did you carry much money to him?

PETER. Why I did not count it. It was in a little green silk purse. There might, I suppose, be the savings out of a fortnight's market pennies.

JOHN. Why of a fortnight?

PETER. Because I took him some money about a fortnight ago; ay, and about a week ago too. Let me see, it was on a Sunday—No, it was on a Monday—No; and yet it must have been on a holiday, for I had my Sunday coat on.

JOHN. And all that money came from Mrs. Miller, did it?

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PETER.

PETER. Why yes, I tell you. Who else should it come from. My father is not such a fool, as he says: a man should save what he gets; and, above all, should never give alms in summer-time, for in that season heaven sends such abundance of roots and herbs, that the poor may fill their stomachs for nothing.

JOHN. What an excellent father!

PETER. Yes, but Mrs. Miller laughs at him for all that. Some time before Christmas, when old Nanny's children had the small-pox—Stay, no, it was after Christmas, because—

JOHN. Well; no matter when it was.

PETER. Well, you see, Mrs. Miller wanted to send me down the village to old Nanny's. But I told her, downright, that I would not go; for it was then a sharp frost; and besides, the children looked so——

JOHN. And what did Mrs. Miller do?

PETER. What did she do? Why went herself! ha! ha! ha! and made such a fuss, and dandled and chatted so with the frightful little creatures, ha! ha! ha!

JOHN. An extraordinary woman!

PETER. Yes, and she is sometimes very odd; crying the whole day, without knowing why. Then, if she would but cry alone, one would not mind it so much; but when she cries, I can't eat or drink, for the soul of me; I must cry too, whether I will or not.

JOHN. [*To the Stranger.*] Are you satisfied now, Sir?

STRANGER. Send that gabbling fool away!

JOHN. Well, good by t'ye, Mr. Peter.

PETER. What, are you going already?

JOHN. No; but Mrs. Miller will be waiting for an answer.

PETER. That's true, sure enough. [*Takes off his hat to the Stranger.*] God bless you, Sir. [*Stranger nods.*] He is certainly vexed [*to John aside.*] because he can't get any thing out of me.

JOHN. It would seem so, indeed.

PETER. Ay, ay; but I am no gossip.

[*Exit.*]

A D R A M A.

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S C E N E V.

STRANGER. JOHN.

JOHN. Well, Sir.

STRANGER. What now?

JOHN. You were wrong, Sir.

STRANGER. Humph!

JOHN. Can you still doubt?

STRANGER. I'll hear no more. [*Pauses.*] Mrs. Miller! Who is this Mrs. Miller? Why is she always thrust before my footsteps? Wherever I tread, I find that she has been before me.

JOHN. You ought to be pleased at that.

STRANGER. Pleased!

JOHN. Ay, Sir; to find that there are other benevolent souls beside yourself.

STRANGER. Pooh!

JOHN. You should endeavour to cultivate her acquaintance.

STRANGER. Ay, marry her, to be sure.

JOHN. Yes, Sir, even marry her, if you chuse it. I have seen her several times in the garden. She is a beautiful woman.

STRANGER. So much the worse. Beauty's a mask.

JOHN. In her it seems the mirror of her soul. Her charity——

STRANGER. Ah, speak no more of her charity. Mere ostentation. In cities, women endeavour to distinguish themselves by their wit: in the country, they seek fame by their benevolencies. Perhaps she is a pious woman; and if so, 'tis bigotry.

JOHN. Well, well; thus is misery ever treated by the world. However, it does not signify.

STRANGER. But it does signify.

JOHN. Not much, I think, to the poor old man.

STRANGER. Then he does not need my assistance.

JOHN. That is a great doubt in my mind.

STRANGER. Why so?

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JOHN.

JOHN. From his most pressing wants, Mrs. Miller, it is true, has relieved him. But whether she has given, or can give him sufficient to support his helpless age——

STRANGER. No more. I'll give him nothing. [*With a sneer.*] You seem to interest yourself very warmly in his behalf. Perhaps you are to share with him.

JOHN. Oh, Sir, that remark did not come from your heart.

STRANGER. [*Recollects himself, and gives his hand to John.*] Forgive me.

JOHN. [*Kissing the hand.*] Ah, Sir, how much you must have been deceived, before this hatred of mankind, this disbelief of virtue and honesty, could have been so rooted in your heart!

STRANGER. You say true. Leave me. [*Throws himself on a bench, and takes from his pocket Zimmerman on Solitude, in which he reads.*]

JOHN. [*Viewing him.*] Ay, now he is going to read again. Thus passes his whole day. Nature has no charms, nor life any joy to him. In the three years that I have been with him, I have never seen him smile. What will be the end of it? If he could but attach himself to any living creature on earth, 'twere something: if but a dog, or a bird: or if he were to plant flowers, or collect butterflies. Some kind of attachment seems natural and necessary to every human being. But he reads almost incessantly; and if he ever opens his lips 'tis to utter an execration upon the whole race of mankind.

STRANGER. [*Reads.*] "There nothing is forgotten; every old wound bleeds afresh; all that once tortured our feelings and distracted our minds, like a spectre, haunts us in our solitude with unrelenting fury."

JOHN. Ay, that good man is right; and therefore should you be advised to quit such solitude, and mix again in the whirl of business and pleasure. [*The Stranger does not seem to hear him.*]

A D R A M A:

S C E N E VI.

STRANGER, JOHN, TOBY [*from the Hut.*]

TOBY. Oh! what a happiness it is, after an illness of seven long tedious weeks, to enjoy again the benign influence of the sun upon these aged limbs. But, in the excess of my joy, I had almost forgotten to pay thanks to my Creator. [*Presses his hat between his hands, lifts his eyes to Heaven, and continues as in prayer.*]

[*Stranger drops the book, and regards the old man with fixed attention.*]

JOHN. [*To Stranger.*] Small, I doubt not, is the portion of happiness that has been bestowed on that old man; and yet even for that scanty allotment he gives thanks to God.

STRANGER. Because he is still led on by hope.

JOHN. So much the better. Hope is the nurse of life.

STRANGER. The arch-deceiver of man.

[*Toby, having finished his ejaculation, puts on his hat, and comes forward.*]

JOHN. Heaven bless you father! I see that you have escaped from the grasp of death.

TOBY. Yes; once more I have. God's goodness, and the kind benevolence of that excellent woman, have prolonged my life, perhaps, for a year or two.

JOHN. Why, to be sure, you have hardly to hope for many years more. You are apparently far advanced in life.

TOBY. Nearly threescore and ten: and on earth it is not likely that I shall enjoy much more happiness; but there is still another, and a better world!

JOHN. You should, perhaps, rather blame the Fates that have thus thrown you back upon the world, when you were so near the grave. Death is a blessing to the unfortunate.

TOBY. Am I then so very unfortunate? Do I not enjoy

enjoy this beauteous morning? Am I not well again? Believe me, Sir, the man who, newly restored from sickness to health, comes again from his chamber into the open air, is at that very moment the happiest creature living.

JOHN. 'Tis a happiness that soon becomes indifferent to a man.

TOBY. It sometimes may be so, Sir; but it is not the case with sick old age. In the winter of life every moment of health is precious. It is true, I have suffered much, and still suffer in this world; yet for all that I do not wish for death. When my father, about forty years since, left me this hut, I was a stout fellow, in the prime of life. I married a brisk housewifely woman. God blessed my house, and made me a father to five children. In this prosperous condition I continued for nine or ten years. Then two of my children died; I endured the loss with fortitude. The great famine then came on; my wife suffered it patiently with me. Four years after that, Heaven was pleased to deprive me of her; and this blow was followed by the death of two more of my children; and one child only of the five, a son, was left me. This was stroke after stroke, indeed; and it was long before I could recover from it. Time, however, and the consolations of religion, prevailed at last, and I began again to look on life with pleasure. My son grew up, and assisted me in my labours: but lately the Prince has deprived me of his help, by taking him from me to carry a musquet. This is hard. I can no longer work, for I am old and feeble; and had not Mrs. Miller assisted me, I must have starved.

JOHN. And yet life has charms for you?

TOBY. Why should it not, so long as there remains in it one object that is dear to my heart? Have I not a son?

JOHN. Who can tell that you will ever see him more?

TOBY. But he lives.

JOHN.

JOHN. For any thing you know to the contrary, he may be dead.

TOBY. Heaven forbid! And if he were, so long as I know it not, he lives in my mind, and that thought sustains my own life. Nay, Sir, if even my dear boy were dead, I should not yet desire to die; for here is still the hut wherein I was born and bred; there is an old lime-tree that has grown up with me; and—I am almost ashamed to mention it; but I have an old and faithful dog, whom I truly love.

JOHN. A dog!

TOBY. Yes, a dog. You may laugh if you please. Mrs. Miller was herself in my hut once. Old Rover snarled when she came in. "Why," said she, "do you not send away that ugly great dog, when you have scarcely bread for yourself?" My God! (I exclaimed) and if I turn him out, who will there be to love me?

JOHN. [*To Stranger.*] Do not be offended, gracious Sir! I wish you had heard this poor old man.

STRANGER. I have heard him.

JOHN. Then I wish you would take example from him.

STRANGER. [*After a pause gives his book to John.*] Lay that on my writing-desk. [*Exit John.*] How much did Mrs. Miller give you?

TOBY. Oh, Sir, that dear angelic woman has given me so much, that I may look to the approaching winter without solicitude.

STRANGER. No more?

TOBY. What more do I need? True, true, I could purchase my son's discharge. But it may be that she has given me full as much as she can spare.

STRANGER. [*Pressing a full purse into his hand.*] There; buy your son's discharge. [*Exit suddenly.*]

TOBY. What is this? [*He opens the purse and finds it full of gold.*] O God! O God! [*Takes off his hat, kneels, and silently gives thanks to Heaven.*]

SCENE VII.

JOHN, TOBY.

TOBY. Now, Sir, do you see that if we put our trust in Heaven it will not forsake us? Here, [*shewing the purse*] here is a mark of God's blessing.

JOHN. I wish you joy; but who gave it you?

TOBY. Your worthy master. Heaven reward him for it.

JOHN. Amen. What a singular character! his only reason for sending me in with the book was, that he might have no witness of his benevolence.

TOBY. He would not even receive my thanks; but was gone before I could speak.

JOHN. Just like him.

TOBY. Now, Sir, I will go as fast as my old legs will carry me (ah, delightful walk!) to buy my poor lad's discharge. How rejoiced will my dear boy be! he has a sweetheart down the village, and a worthy girl she is! What happiness! O God, how great is thy goodness! Years of sorrow cannot efface the remembrance of past joys; yet one happy moment cancels whole years of affliction. Farewel. Tell your master of my felicity; 'twill please him more than my thanks. [*Going; but, recollecting himself, says*] Stop; I was wrong. My old companion has hungered and mourned with me: he must be happy with me too. He and my son are old friends! Oh, how my poor Rover will jump before us!

[*Goes into the hut.*]

JOHN. [*Looking after him.*] Why, why am not I rich! or a prince! it is in moments like these that I envy wealth and power.

[*Exit.*]

S C E N E V I I I .

*A Room in the Castle.**Enter EULALIA, with a letter in her hand.*

EULALIA. That will not suit me. The silent solitude was more congenial to me. Tranquillity, indeed, is not always the inmate of a secluded person's bosom; for conscience accompanies us into convents, and among deserts. But in my solitude I could give vent to my tears when grief oppressed my heart; and no one saw my sorrow, or asked me why I wept. I could traverse fields, or roam through vallies, and indulge my melancholy thoughts, and no one knew that the stings of conscience goaded me. Now I shall be torn from contemplation, dragged into society, and forced to join in the frivolous amusements of the gay and the idle. If the weather be fine, I must accompany them in their walks; if otherwise, I must join them at cards. If I take up a book, I shall be either unseasonably desired to read aloud, or impertinently told to throw the stupid book away. Would they had continued in town, and enjoyed their balls, their routs, and other fashionable pastimes; had been whirled in the vortex of scandal, deceit, and seduction, ere——[*Looking into the letter*] and this very day too! I really dread it. Nor can I draw any accurate conclusion from this note, whether they are leaving town for the indulgence merely of the whim of the moment, or with the purpose of a long residence here. I much fear the latter: and if so, farewell Solitude, that with thy magic wand hast so oft brought peace to my wounded spirit. Farewel books; idle conversation will usurp your place. In the grounds where the beams of the morning illumed the tear as it stole from my eye, in my retired walks, the cry of the hunter and the yell of the hounds will banish all reflection. Yet even this annoyance I might endure. But should
the

the Countess shew me proofs of attention, or of esteem, which in my soul I shall know that I deserve not, how will my conscience torment me ! Again—(at which thought I shudder) should the Castle become the resort of visitors, among whom chance might bring some of my former acquaintance!—Ah, how wretched are they who feel compelled to shun the sight of those who, but for some fatal cause, were most welcome to them !

SCENE IX.

PETER, EULALIA.

PETER. Well, here I am.

EULALIA. What, back already !

PETER. Yes, have not I made haste ? And yet I caught a butterfly by the way ; and had a quarter of an hour's chat too.

EULALIA. Chat if you please ; but do not betray my secret.

PETER. Oh, you may be very sure of that. No, no ; I told old Toby once for all, that he would never learn from me that the money came from you.

EULALIA. Very pretty indeed.

PETER. And as for Mr. John, ha ! ha ! ha ! I sent him off too as wise as I met him.

EULALIA. And you found old Toby quite recovered ?

PETER. To be sure I did. He was to go out into the air to-day for the first time.

EULALIA. Thank God ! [*aside*] Yet how childish 'tis in me to exult so in reflecting on one trivial good act ! With as much propriety might the debtor triumph, who, owing a hundred thousand pounds, has been enabled to pay one guinea of the sum.

PETER. He told me that he owed all to you ; and that before he dined he would creep up stairs to kiss your hands.

EULALIA.

EULALIA. Dear Mr. Peter, will you do me a favour?

PETER. O Lud! a hundred with all the pleasure in the world; if you will only let me have a good long look in your sweet face.

EULALIA. With all my heart. Only observe, that if old Toby should call, you do not let him come up stairs. Tell him that I am busy—or that I am not very well—or I am asleep—or any thing else that you please.

PETER. Very well: and if he won't go by fair words, I'll set the dogs at him.

EULALIA. Not for the world! You must not do him the least harm, d'ye hear. Pray take care that he be not hurt.

PETER. Well, well; it shall be just as you please: or else, Sultan is a fine dog, and Carlo has seized many a country bumpkin.

S C E N E X.

EULALIA, PETER, BITTERMAN.

BITTERMAN. Good morning, good morning to you, my dear charming Mrs. Miller. I am heartily glad to see you well. You have been pleased, Madam, to send for me. Some news, perhaps, from the Town-house. Yes, yes, there are strange things going on in the world. I have got letters too.

EULALIA. Indeed, Mr. Bitterman! Why I believe that you correspond with the whole world.

BITTERMAN. [*Consequentially.*] I have, to be sure, my confidential correspondents in all the capital cities and courts of Europe.

EULALIA. And yet I doubt whether you are apprised of what is to happen in this very house this very day.

BITTERMAN. Here? In this house? Oh, nothing of any importance. We intended indeed to sow a couple of barrels of oats, but the weather is too dry. I had letters from Transylvania yesterday, where, it seems, they
want

want rain as much as we do: it is, in short, a universal complaint all over Europe. But however, you may still have agreeable amusement, for it is shearing time.

PETER. And the eggs of the great clucking hen must be hatched to-day; and the wild bay stallion——

BITTERMAN. Hold your tongue, blockhead!

PETER. See there now. I must not open my mouth.
[*Puts on his hat, and goes off surlily.*]

EULALIA. Our Count will be here to-day.

BITTERMAN. Hey—What!

EULALIA. With the Countess and her brother Major Horst.

BITTERMAN. Surely, Madam, you are pleased to joke.

EULALIA. You know, Mr. Bitterman, that I am not much given to joking.

BITTERMAN. Oh dear me! Peter! Heavens, his grace the Count in his own illustrious person!—Peter! and her grace the Countess, and the right honourable Major Horst. And nothing in proper order. Peter! Peter!

PETER [*Re-enters.*] Hey, what the plague is the matter now, I wonder.

BITTERMAN. Call all the people together directly. Send to the gamekeeper; he must furnish the kitchen with a doe—and let Peggy sweep the rooms and dust the looking-glasses, that her grace the Countess may view her noble self from top to toe—and the cook must kill a couple of capons—and Jack must fetch a pike from the pond—and Frederic must dress my Sunday's wig—and—and—[*Peter goes out.*]

EULALIA. It will be particularly necessary to have the beds well aired, and the sofas beat up. The Count, you know, is fond of being at his ease.

BITTERMAN. Surely, surely, my dear charming Mrs. Miller, it shall be done immediately. Hang it, now I recollect, I have stored some bushels of potatoes in the green room; and they cannot be easily removed.

EULALIA. It will not be necessary, Mr. Bitterman.

BITTERMAN.

BITTERMAN. Lud, lud! but where is Major Horst to sleep?

EULALIA. Let him have the small red room near the stair-case; it is a pretty chamber, and has a delightful prospect.

BITTERMAN. True, my good Mrs. Miller; but the Count's secretary has always had that room; though, to be sure, his Grace has not much occasion for him; he scarcely has two letters to write in a whole year. One might—stop, a happy thought strikes me. You know the small house at the end of the park. We'll put the secretary there.

EULALIA. You forget, my good Mr. Bitterman, that the Stranger resides there.

BITTERMAN. Ay, but who is he? What is he to us? Who told him he might live there? He must be turned out.

EULALIA. That would be very unjust. You gave him that lodging yourself, and I think he pays you well for it.

BITTERMAN. Why so he does indeed; and such a perquisite for a poor steward is not to be despised: but——

EULALIA. But what?

BITTERMAN. One knows not who he is. The devil can't find him out. What care I for his money, if he gives me constant trouble for every penny he pays me.

EULALIA. How does he give you trouble?

BITTERMAN. Why have not I for months past been plagued out of my life in order to discover who he is? Though, indeed, it is not long since I received a letter from Spain, which informed me, that a spy had fixed his abode somewhere hereabout; and by the description——

EULALIA. Ay, that is very likely. Perhaps the king of Spain has heard of your excellent breed of small cattle; and as his own are not worth much, he is endeavouring to steal the secret of your skill from you. No,

no, my dear Mr. Bitterman, let that strange recluse remain in quietness. I never happened to meet him, nor, indeed, am I very curious about him; but from all that I hear speak of him, I find that he is a sort of man that may be suffered to reside anywhere. He lives in peace and quiet.

BITTERMAN. So he does.

EULALIA. He performs many charitable deeds in secret.

BITTERMAN. So he does.

EULALIA. He does not offend even a child.

BITTERMAN. He does not.

EULALIA. He is troublesome to nobody.

BITTERMAN. He is not.

EULALIA. Then what would you desire more?

BITTERMAN. I want to know who he is; and if he would but suffer one to converse a little with him, that one might have an opportunity to catch him unawares—But no! If he ever falls in my way, either in the dark lime-walk, or down by the rivulet (for those are his favourite walks), he mutters, “Good day to you,” and goes on his way. Twice I have begun to speak first: “It is fine weather to-day.”—Yes—“The trees have begun to bud.”—Yes.—“You are taking a little walk, Sir, I see,”—Yes. Phoooh, let him walk and be —! Then, like master like man. His servant is just such another odd fellow. I know nothing of him neither, but that his name is John.

EULALIA. You grow warm, my dear Mr. Bitterman, and seem to have entirely forgotten the arrival of the Count.

BITTERMAN.—Damn——! Heaven forgive me, and so I had, I protest. You see, my dear Mrs. Miller, what a vexatious thing it is not to know every body about one.

EULALIA. [*Looking at the clock.*] Nine o'clock already, I declare. If the Count arose only one hour before his usual time, he will soon be here. I must go

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and

and attend to my duty. You, Mr. Bitterman, will think about your's. [Exit,

S C E N E XI.

BITTERMAN, *solus*.

BITTERMAN. Yes, yes, I shall attend to my duty, I'll warrant. Why now there is something mighty odd about *her* too. God knows who she may be. Mrs. Miller: O Lord, there are many Mrs. Millers in the world. It is a very convenient name. All I know is, that her Grace the Countess about three years ago put this Mrs. Miller into the house as suddenly and as unexpectedly as the egg of a cuckow is put into the nest of a robin. But whence came she, and what for? that is the question. "She is to manage affairs within the "house," said the Countess. Good God! why, have not I kept house, and managed within and without these twenty years, and with the greatest credit? To be sure I grow rather old; and I must own that she gives herself a great deal of trouble, and takes great care. But has not she learned every thing from me? When she first came hither (Heaven forgive us!) she did not even know that linen was made of flax. [Exit,

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

S C E N E I. *A Room in the Castle.*

[Enter Major HORST, obsequiously conducted by BITTERMAN and PETER, the latter of whom echoes his father's remarks, and imitates his manners during the whole scene.]

BITTERMAN. I HAVE the honour to present before your excellency, Mr. Bitterman, maître d'hotel, who blesses the hour that gave him the happiness of seeing his Grace's most noble brother-in-law.

PETER. Most noble brother-in-law.

MAJOR. Oh, this is too much, Mr. Bitterman. Good Sir, I am a soldier, as you see; and as I use little ceremony myself, so I desire as little from others.

BITTERMAN. I most humbly beg your Lordship's pardon; but though one does live in the country, one is not on that account wholly unacquainted with the respect due to persons of high birth.

PETER. We respect persons of high birth.

MAJOR. Well, well, we shall soon be better acquainted. You must know, Mr. Bitterman, that I purpose living for at least a couple of months upon the good things of the Castle.

BITTERMAN. Why not for years, gracious Sir? It would be a thing exactly to my mind. Old Bitterman has, without boasting, saved and scraped so much together, that his Grace the Count will be astonished at it.

MAJOR.

MAJOR. So much the better; and you will find my brother-in-law a man to your mind too. I suppose you know that he has left the army, and intends to pass the remainder of his life peaceably here at Winterfee.

BITTERMAN. You astonish me, Sir! No, I had not heard the smallest hint of such a thing.

PETER. Nor I.

MAJOR. You knew our late Prince. He was no great lover of soldiers, and kept no more than were necessary to guard the gates of the Castle. In that I think he was very right; for the country never thought him seriously disposed to war; and for amusement a couple of thousand men are rather too many. When he died, however, his successor quitted his hobby-horses and other play-things, and exchanged his wooden army for a living one; and now his whole day was occupied in training and exercising, in feigned marches and counter-marches. By four every morning the Prince was on horseback; and this the General, my brother-in-law, did not very much like. He had been accustomed to receive the daily returns and reports, sitting in his elbow chair; to appear on the parade, at the utmost, perhaps, once a week; and now to sacrifice his ease and comfort for such trifling occupations! No, Sir, he could not brook it, but demanded his dismissal.

BITTERMAN. Indeed!

PETER. Indeed!

BITTERMAN. Very odd, indeed; but just the thing for me. Now will old Bitterman begin to enjoy life.

PETER. Yes, and young Peter too.

BITTERMAN. His Grace the Count, if I remember rightly, reads all the news-papers. Is there any news, Major, in the political world?

MAJOR. Nothing, except that it is thought a war must soon break out among the neighbouring powers.

BITTERMAN. [*Consequentially.*] Oh, that we have known these two months.

PETER. Yes, that we have known these two months.

MAJOR. [*Smiling.*] Impossible, Mr. Bitterman. Why two months ago the very powers that are going to war knew nothing of it themselves.

BITTERMAN. Ha! ha! ha! There's the thing now! But if one happens to have friends in the cabinets and courts of Europe—if one has correspondents—if one receives letters from all quarters—

MAJOR. [*Aside.*] Oh, I perceive I had much better have passed this time out of doors. There is some variety in the works of creation that may afford amusement to every mind.

BITTERMAN. I am only sorry, Major, that it is not in my power to entertain you better.

PETER. Yes, and I am very sorry too.

BITTERMAN. I can't imagine where Mrs. Miller is. She is a nimble-tongued lady.

MAJOR. Who is that Mrs. Miller?

BITTERMAN. Ay, Sir; who is she, indeed? for my part, that is a question that I cannot exactly answer.

PETER. Nor I.

BITTERMAN. None of my correspondents have given me the least information concerning her. She is here in the capacity of housekeeper; though to be sure — Oh, I think I hear her voice. She is coming up stairs. I shall have the honour of sending her to you immediately.

MAJOR. Oh, do not trouble yourself.

BITTERMAN. No trouble, Sir, I assure you. I am ever your Honour's most obedient, most humble, and most profoundly devoted servant. [*Exit, bowing very low.*]

PETER. Yes, and I am your most profound and devoted servant likewise. [*Exit, with many awkward bows.*]

MAJOR. Now shall I be pestered, in all probability, with some old woman, who will talk me to death. O patience, thou most precious of all virtues!

S C E N E II.

EULALIA, MAJOR.

[Eulalia on entering makes a graceful obeisance, which the Major politely returns.]

MAJOR. [*Aside.*] No, old she is not ; [*Casts another glance at her.*] nor ugly, as I live.

EULALIA. Sir, I am extremely happy in this opportunity of becoming acquainted with the brother of the best friend I have in the world.

MAJOR. Madam, any title would be valuable that gave me a claim to your esteem.

EULALIA. [*Without returning the compliment either by look or motion.*] The fine weather, I presume, has induced the Count to leave town.

MAJOR. I believe not, Madam. You know that to him all seasons are alike, rain and sunshine, spring and winter, so there be but a continual spring in his own house ; that is to say, if he have but a well-spread table, a cheerful lady to preside at it, and a couple of friends to give a zest to his wine.

EULALIA. The Count is an amiable epicure ; always in the same humour, and happily enjoying every moment of his life. But then it must be recollected, that the Count is the favourite of fortune ; I do not mean to allude to his birth or his wealth, though he does honour to both ; but his equable temper and excellent constitution. A healthy frame is usually the tenement of a cheerful soul. Weak nerves, or an ill habit of body, would make the Count miserable even in the arms of your amiable sister.

MAJOR. [*Surprised at the cultivated understanding which Eulalia's remarks indicate.*] 'Tis true, Madam ; my good brother-in-law seems to feel his happiness, and is careful to preserve it. Attached to an easy tranquil life, he has left the army, that his enjoyment may be uninterrupted.

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EULALIA.

EULALIA. The intention, Sir, does honour to his understanding.

MAJOR. Yes, Madam, if solitude does not at last become tiresome to him.

EULALIA. I think, Major, that he who brings with him into solitude a correct mind and a pure heart, will find every joy of life improved by the charms of retirement.

MAJOR. This is the first time, I think, that I ever heard a descant in praise of solitude from the lips of the fair.

EULALIA. That, Sir, is a compliment to me at the expence of my sex.

MAJOR. Pray, may I be permitted to ask how long it is since solitude acquired so able an advocate?

EULALIA. I have lived here about three years.

MAJOR. And did a secret wish never arise to return to the bustle and diversion of the town?

EULALIA. Never, Sir, I assure you.

MAJOR. It is a proof either of a very uncultivated or of a very refined soul. Your first appearance left me no doubt in what class you ought to be ranked.

EULALIA. [*Sighing.*] And yet there may be a third class.

MAJOR. Really, Madam, without the smallest intention to depreciate your sex, I must observe, that women always appeared to me less suited to solitude than men. We have a thousand various ways to occupy and amuse the mind which are not accommodable to your sex.

EULALIA. May I ask what those are?

MAJOR. We ride, we hunt, we play, we write letters; nay, we turn authors sometimes, and write books.

EULALIA. The noble diversion of the chace, and the still more noble amusement of play, I allow you; but I fear you do not gain much by such advantages.

MAJOR. Indeed, I could wish to be made acquainted with the nature of your occupations for an entire day.

EULALIA. Oh, you would not believe, Sir, how the time glides away when life is regulated by a certain uniformity. One day the copy of another; the morning and evening hour of to-day like those of yesterday. One is often led involuntarily to ask, Is Saturday come already? In a bright and tranquil morning, when I have my breakfast-table set out in the green court-yard, the interesting picture of labour and diligence surrounding me, always presents a something new for the mind to contemplate. The birds chirp; the ducks and geese muddle and gabble; the cattle are turned out, and strongly express their enjoyment of the pasture; the ploughman drives to the fields void of care, and as he passes wishes me a friendly good morning; all, in short, is living and moving, and happy. After having enjoyed this delightful scene for an hour or two, I turn to my domestic affairs, and before I have well begun to stir myself, 'tis noon. Toward evening I begin to walk out, from the garden into the park, from the park into the fields. I feed my poultry, water my plants, gather strawberries, or pluck cherries from the trees, or am an enraptured spectator of the homely but honest amusements of the country lads and lasses.

MAJOR. All these are the enjoyments of the summer; but the winter! the winter!

EULALIA. The winter! and why should the winter always be presented to our view, like chilling old age muffled up in fur-skin. The winter has recreations peculiar to itself. When hail and snow beat on the outside of the window, the very idea of being in a comfortable warm room has something in it that cheers the soul. Then the winter is the season for enjoying our books, and we improve the mind and amend the heart by reading; or I have my harpsichord tuned, as well at least as our parish-clerk can perform that office, and play a sonata of Mozart, or sing an air of Paisiello.

MAJOR.

MAJOR. How happy is that being, that can find a continual source of amusement or of occupation in his own mind!

EULALIA. And how insatiably does a town life devour the precious moments of our existence! To-day I must make visits of ceremony; to-morrow, must receive some that, perhaps, are troublesome to me. To-day I must work myself a dress cap, and trim a gown to-morrow. In this happy abode no one cares about my dress. To the curate's wife my cap is always of the very newest fashion.

MAJOR. But is it not sometimes desirable to snatch a sight of the men?

EULALIA. And can you suppose, Sir, that that gratification is denied me? Ah, Major! I daily look on men more healthy and more happy than your skeleton beaux in town. Beside the company of Mr. Bitterman and of his son Peter, I have considerable pleasure in the society of the good women of the village, who will often divert me heartily. They come in the winter-time with their spinning-wheels; and when I have set myself among them, they begin to instruct me in the management of flax and hemp, in the oeconomy of the dairy, and such kinds of useful knowledge; and these good souls love me dearly, because by occasionally advising with them, I give them in their own eyes no small portion of consequence.

MAJOR. If there is a being in the world, Madam, that knows how to extract honey from every flower, it is yourself.

[Eulalia heaves an involuntary sigh.]

SCENE III.

[PETER enters rather embarrassed.]

PETER. I can't stop him. He is on the stairs, and will come up.

EULALIA. Who?

PETER.

PETER. Why old Toby. If you had let me set Sultan at him, I'll warrant he had never got over the threshold. [Exit.]

TOBY. [Forcing himself in.] I must! I must! My God! do not stop me.

EULALIA. [Confused.] I have no time now, Father. You see I am not alone.

TOBY. Ah, that good gentleman will excuse me.

MAJOR. What do you desire?

TOBY. To pay my thanks. Benefits received are a burden insupportable, if the heart is not suffered to relieve itself by thanks.

EULALIA. To-morrow, my good man, to-morrow.

MAJOR. No false delicacy, Madam, I entreat you. Pray allow him to give utterance to his feelings, and me to be witness of a scene, by which I am to be better informed how you pass your time, than I should ever be from your own discourse. Speak, Father! speak.

TOBY. Oh! that every word of mine had power to draw a blessing on your head! I lay forsaken in my hut; shivering fits came on me; the damps chilled me; the wind whistled through the broken boards of my decayed lodging, and the rain beat in at my battered casement. I had no covering for my feet; but my faithful dog threw himself across them, wagged his tail to comfort me, and looked his friendship; but not a mouthful of food was left for this inseparable companion of my old age.—Ah! then appeared an angel in your fair form; you gave me medicines, and your soothing voice, even more than they, strengthened and revived me; the chicken broth with which you nourished, and the wine where-with you cheered me, has rescued me from the bed of death; and this very day I have enjoyed new life for the first time in the open air. I have returned thanks to Heaven for its mercies, and now am come to you, noble lady.—Pray let me shed a tear on your benevolent hand. [Is going to kneel, but is prevented by Eulalia.] It is for your

your sake, surely, that God has thus blessed me. The strange gentleman too, who lives yonder, near my hut, has given me to-day a purse of gold to buy my poor boy's deliverance. I am now going to town to procure his discharge, and then he will give me a virtuous girl for my daughter-in-law; perhaps I may yet fondle a grand-child in my lap; and if you should then pass my happy, happy hut!—what inward pleasure will it give you to reflect, that it is all the work of your own hands, actuated by your own benevolent heart!

EULALIA. [*Earnestly.*] Enough, Father; enough.

TOBY. Enough, indeed! I cannot express what is written on my heart; but Heaven knows my happiness, and may God and your own heart reward you for it!

[*Exit.*]

S C E N E IV.

EULALIA, MAJOR.

[*Eulalia with downcast eyes struggling with the embarrassment of a noble soul surprised in the commission of a good action. The Major stands opposite to her, and casts glances toward her from time to time, in which his heart is evidently concerned.*]

EULALIA. [*Endeavouring to change the subject.*] I think the Count may now be soon expected.

MAJOR. I believe not, Madam. He drives slowly, and travels on rugged roads. His delay, however, has procured me a satisfaction that I shall never forget.

EULALIA. Ah! Major, you satirize your own sex in saying so.

MAJOR. How?

EULALIA. In thus intimating that such scenes are uncommon to your eyes.

MAJOR. You say right, Madam. And this very day—I confess—I was so little prepared for such an acquaintance as I have made with you, that—I cannot express my surprise. When Bitterman announced you as
Mrs.

Mrs. Miller, who could have thought that under so common a name —

EULALIA. A not quite common woman should be found [*ironically.*] Let me take the liberty, therefore, Sir, to remind you of what many a moralist has recommended without effect, to esteem more cordially a good person without a name, than a wealthy fool with a title of three centuries antiquity. Pardon me, Sir, I perceive that I am beginning to be impertinent. Women are apt to prattle.

MAJOR. Yes, and with such fascination to lead us from our road!—Your name was the subject of our conversation.

EULALIA. It was, Sir; but I have no ambition to make my humble name illustrious, or to give it an importance that belongs not to it.

MAJOR. Pardon me, Madam; 'tis, perhaps, an improper curiosity.—You have been [*reservedly*] or are married?

EULALIA. [*Her lively humour changed to sadness.*] I was married, Major.

MAJOR. [*Whose inquisitive remarks are restrained by the strictest delicacy.*] A widow then?

EULALIA. I entreat, Sir.—There are strings in the human heart, which, being touched, will produce dreadful discord. I beseech you, Sir——

MAJOR. I comprehend. [*With delicate respect.*

EULALIA. [*After a pause, in which she has endeavoured to resume her former levity.*] Really, Sir, I shall begin to follow Mr. Bitterman's example. Any news from the town-house, Major?

MAJOR. Nothing of any consequence. Yet, Madam, I am at some loss to know what subject in town can interest you. Have you any acquaintance there?

EULALIA. None, Sir.

MAJOR. Perhaps not even a native of our country.

EULALIA. Neither born nor educated in it.

MAJOR.

MAJOR. May I use the freedom of asking what climate —

EULALIA. Had the honour and the good fortune to produce my insignificant person? I am a German woman, the Holy Roman Empire is my native country.

MAJOR. You really know admirably well how to involve every thing in a veil of mystery, except your virtues.

EULALIA. You must excuse the vanity of my sex.

SCENE V.

[BITTERMAN and Peter fling open the door, and the Count and Countess enter, leading their little boy.]

COUNT. Well, here we are. Heaven bless our entrance and our exit. Mrs. Miller, I bring you an invalid, who means in future to march under no other colours than your's. [Salutes her.]

EULALIA. My standard waves toward solitude.

COUNT. And is painted on both sides with Cupids.

COUNTESS. [Who at the same time embraces Eulalia in the most friendly manner.] My good Count, you surely forget that I am present.

COUNT. My dear Countess, I surely ought not to be behind hand with your worthy brother. He has half killed my four greys, in order to arrive two or three minutes before us.

MAJOR. Your remark might have been more just, had I been previously apprized of all the attractions the Castle possessed.

COUNTESS. [To Eulalia.] Is not my William grown very tall?

EULALIA. Sweet child! [As she stoops to him, a deep melancholy shades her countenance.]

COUNT. Well, Bitterman, I hope you have taken care to provide us a good dinner.

BITTERMAN,

BITTERMAN. As good, my Lord, as was possible to be prepared at so short a notice.

[While the Count is having his great coat taken off, the

Major takes the Countess aside.

MAJOR. Pray, sister, what jewel is this that you have buried in the country?

COUNTESS. Ha! ha! ha! my sweet hater of women, are you caught?

MAJOR. Nay, but pray answer me.

COUNTESS. Well, her name is Miller.

MAJOR. That I know; but—

COUNTESS. And more I do not know myself.

MAJOR. Are you really serious? for I wish to know—

COUNTESS. Seriously then, brother, I wish you would not tease me. [Loud.] Dear, dear, I have a thousand things that require much more attention. The first and most important is my head-dress. I lay a wager that before we have been an hour arrived, the parson and the bailiff will pay their respects to me. The looking-glass must, therefore, be consulted. Come, William, we will go and dress ourselves. *Jusq'au-revoir*, dear Mrs. Miller.

[Exit with the child.

MAJOR. I find myself in a very odd situation.

[Going.

COUNT. Where are you going, brother?

MAJOR. Up to my room.

COUNT. Nay, pray do not leave us. We will take a ramble before dinner.

MAJOR. Excuse me. So many different things are rambling in my brain, that I can think of no other kind of ramble.

SCENE VI.

The COUNT, BITTERMAN, PETER, EULALIA.

[*The Count throws himself into an arm chair. Eulalia stands on one side, takes out her netting needle and begins to work, now and then wiping off a tear from her eye.*]

COUNT. Well, Bitterman, you are as great an oddity as ever.

BITTERMAN. At your Grace's service.

COUNT. I think we shall have a great deal of mirth among us.

BITTERMAN. I hope so, please God!

COUNT. [*Pointing to Peter.*] What great booby have you there?

BITTERMAN. I have the honour most respectfully to inform your Grace, that he is my own son Peter.

[*Peter makes many awkward bows.*]

COUNT. So so;—but how stand the house affairs?

BITTERMAN. All well. I have, without boasting, worked like a horse.

COUNT. And why not like an ass?

BITTERMAN. Or like an ass, if your Grace please to order it so. The hay this year is in excellent condition; but the wheat has suffered much by the blight.

COUNT. How is it with the game?

BITTERMAN. Of birds great plenty; but the hares this spring have been very busy at the blade.

COUNT. Are you a sportsman?

BITTERMAN. Why formerly, an' please your Grace, I was a bit of a marksman; but about four years ago, meeting with the misfortune to kill three tame Turkish geese, which I mistook for wild-fowl, I have not fired a gun since. Peter here, my son, sometimes shoots sparrows.

PETER. Yes, I shoot sparrows.

BITTERMAN.

BITTERMAN. But I have taken care to provide another kind of amusement for your Grace. Your Grace must see how I have had the park trimmed. You would not know it again. There is a very pretty hermitage, delightful serpentine walks, an obelisk, and the ruins of an old castle; and all with such saving and such œconomy. Ha! ha! ha! There your Grace will find I have built a pretty Chinese bridge over the rivulet; and where do you think I got the wood for it? Ha! ha! ha! The old broken-down hen-house exactly answered the purpose.

COUNT. That wood must have been quite rotten. Is the bridge still standing?

BITTERMAN. Oh, yes, my Lord, to this hour.

COUNT. Well, I will go and see all these rarities. [*Rising.*] Do you get dinner ready in the mean time.

BITTERMAN. All the necessary orders are given. I shall have the honour most humbly to attend your Grace.

PETER. And I too shall have the honour to accompany your Grace.

COUNT. [*In passing Eulalia.*] You are as industrious, Mrs. Miller, as if your livelihood depended on your netting. - [*Exeunt Count, Bitterman, and Peter.*]

S C E N E VII.

EULALIA *sola.*

What is it that so disturbs me? My heart bleeds, and my tears involuntarily flow. At a time when I thought I had entirely subdued my sorrows, and certainly had assumed something of that cheerful spirit once so congenial to my soul, all, all my wounds are rent asunder, and bleed afresh at the sight of that child. Alas! the Countess knew not when she was calling him William, that she stabbed me to the heart. I too have a William, if he be still alive, about the same size and age. If he be still alive! Ah, who knows that he and my Amelia have not long

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since

since invoked woe upon my head before the tribunal of the Most High? Why, why, perturbed imagination, dost thou torment me with this horrid phantom? Why dost thou fill my ears with their lamentable cries? Why picture my poor little ones to my sight struggling with fever, and panting after a refreshing draught, which is administered to them by the hand of a hireling, or perhaps refused! Alas! they are forsaken by their unnatural mother, abandoned wretch as she is!—And that this horrible remorse should be excited just on the very day when my heart most needed a mask!

S C E N E VIII.

BETTY, EULALIA.

BETTY. [*Speaking behind the scene.*] Yes to be sure; fine accommodation for me indeed! Why not put me into the stable? Your servant, Mrs. Miller. [*Entering.*] You will be so good as to let me have a room that is fit for a gentlewoman.

EULALIA. I really think that you have been shewn into a very pretty room.

BETTY. A pretty room! Yes indeed, behind the stair-case, and just over the cow-house. I should not get a wink of sleep for the horrid smell.

EULALIA. I slept there a whole year myself. [*Mildly.*

BETTY. Indeed! Then I would advise you to sleep there again; and the sooner the better. My good Madam, [*sneering*] there is a great deal of difference between certain persons [*looking at herself*] and certain persons [*at Eulalia.*] Much depends on what one has been accustomed to from one's infancy. My late papa was state coachman, and wore the livery of his Serene Highness. Certain persons seem to have dropt from the clouds, and may, perhaps, have been bred from childhood in a cow-house. Suppose, Ma'am, you were to let me have your room.

EULALIA.

EULALIA. If it be the Countess's order, I will give it up to you immediately, with all my heart.

BETTY. If it be the Countess's order! Great persons should be pestered for orders about such trifles, to be sure. Indeed, I shall have my trunk carried where I please.

EULALIA. That you may; only not into my room.

BETTY. Into *your* room, Ma'am!

EULALIA. I keep the key of it.

BETTY. Then pray give it to me.

EULALIA. The moment I receive orders from the Countess so to do.

BETTY. Provoking creature! But how can one expect manners from hogs and geese!

S C E N E IX.

PETER, EULALIA, BETTY.

PETER. [*Running in almost breathless*] O Lord!
O Lord!

EULALIA. What is the matter?

PETER. The gentleman has fallen into the water.
His Grace is drowned.

EULALIA and BETTY. How! What!

PETER. His Grace the Count——

EULALIA. Drowned?

PETER. Yes.

EULALIA. Is he dead?

PETER. No; he is not dead yet.

EULALIA. Well then, pray don't scream out so; for Heaven's sake don't let the Countess hear you!

PETER. Not scream out! O Lord! O Lord! Why his noble Grace runs down with water like a dog after a duck-hunt.

SCENE X.

COUNTESS, MAJOR, PETER, EULALIA, BETTY.

[*The Countess and the Major from opposite sides.*]

COUNTESS. What is the matter?

MAJOR. What is this noise about?

EULALIA. An accident, Madam; I fancy a trivial one. The Count has gone too near the water, and wetted his feet a little.

PETER. His feet! Oh, your humble servant for that. He was soufed over head and ears.

COUNTESS. Gracious God!

MAJOR. I'll fly to——

EULALIA. Stay, Major. Make yourself easy, Madam. Whatever may have happened to the Count, he is now safe. Is he not, Mr. Peter?

PETER. To be sure his Grace is not dead; but he is devilish wet.

COUNTESS. Pray, young man, explain this dreadful accident.

MAJOR. Relate all that you know.

PETER. What, from beginning to end?

COUNTESS. Yes, yes; but begin.

PETER. Well then, you see we three were all in the room; I, my papa, and the Count.

EULALIA. I perceive that in this manner Mr. Peter will not have finished to-night. Well, you were in the room, and went out with the Count.

PETER. Yes.

EULALIA. Into the park.

PETER. Yes.

EULALIA. And there you walked——

PETER. Very right. But how the deuce could you know that? Faith, I believe you deal in witchcraft.

EULALIA. And what happened then?

PETER. Why, we went down by the rivulet, and came to the fine Chinese bridge which my papa built of the old hen-bouse boards. His Grace the Count went upon the
bridge;

bridge; and then he said, what a pretty sight it was to see the stream winding through the bushes; and after that he leaned a little against the railing. Crack went the rails, and down fell his Grace plump into the water.

EULALIA. But you brought him out immediately?

PETER. Not I.

EULALIA. Your father did then?

PETER. Oh, no, he did not, I assure you.

EULALIA. Did you leave him in the water then?

PETER. Yes, we left him in the water, to be sure; but then, you see, we squalled out as loud as we could, and I believe you might have heard us down in the village.

EULALIA. And this brought the people to your assistance?

PETER. No; but the Stranger came, who lives yonder by old Toby's hut; he that never speaks to any body, you know. Oh, he is a devil of a fellow! At one jump he was in the water. There he splashed about like a duck; at last he got hold of his Grace's hair, and dragged him on to the bank.

COUNTESS. Heaven reward him!

MAJOR. But what became of them then?

PETER. They are coming up the walk.

EULALIA. The Stranger too?

PETER. Oh no; he ran off. His Grace wanted to thank him; but my chuffy gentleman was off.

S C E N E XI.

COUNT, BITTERMAN, &c.

COUNTESS. [*Running to embrace the Count.*] Oh, my dear lord!

COUNT. Keep off, keep off, Countess; you see I am dripping wet.

COUNTESS. Get dry linen ready. Quick.

COUNT. Make yourself easy, my dear lady; I am out of all danger. A dip in a pond is nothing to an old

soldier. But it might have had worse consequences if it had not been for the noble-minded Stranger. Who is that gentleman? Does any one know him? I can get nothing from Bitterman about him, but what is wholly unintelligible.

EULALIA. We cannot find out who or what he is. He came here some months since, and hired of Mr. Bitterman that small house near the end of the park. There he lives in perfect solitude; speaks to nobody, and sees nobody unless by accident. I have never seen him but twice, and then at too great a distance to distinguish his features. Musing and melancholy he seems; creeps cautiously about, and avoids every one who would approach him. Yet he does many a good action in secret.

COUNT. Betty, go and ask the favour of his company to sup with us to-night. Bid him to consider mine as the house of a friend.

COUNTESS. You forget all this time that you stand in damp clothes.

COUNT. I'll go and change them directly.

COUNTESS. And do take some spirits of hartshorn.

COUNT. Nonsense! Hartshorn indeed! Let me have a glass of Madeira to drive the blood more briskly through my veins. Hark ye, Bitterman! You have, I must tell you, a pretty powerful voice. When you bellow, one may hear it under the water.

BITTERMAN. At your Grace's pleasure.

COUNT. But I wish you and your Chinese bridge had both been a thousand leagues off. *[Exit.]*

COUNTESS. Come, brother; we must persuade him to take a few grains of James's powder. I hope, Mrs. Miller, you have some in the house.

EULALIA. I will get them, my lady. *[Exit.]*

COUNTESS. Now, brother. *[Exeunt Countess and Major.]*

S C E N E XII.

BITTERMAN, PETER, BETTY.

BETTY. Ha! ha! ha! So, my dear Mr. Bitterman, I think you have exposed yourself a little.

BITTERMAN. Good gracious, honourable Miss, one is naturally desirous, you know, to be as œconomical as possible. Our gracious master the Count admires œconomy, I know.

BETTY. Yes; but he does not seem to admire bridges that are built of rotten wood.

BITTERMAN. I am sure it is not quite rotten yet in every part. Only his Grace the Count happens to be a little too weighty.

BETTY. But how came you not to jump into the water yourself, to save his Grace, when you saw him in such danger?

BITTERMAN. Heaven forbid I should have attempted such a thing! Bless me, I should have sunk to the bottom like a lump of lead. No, no; every man to his business. Besides, I had a letter of consequence in my pocket, which the water would have destroyed, or at least rendered unintelligible; a letter from France, from the Marquis of ——— Phoo! what makes me forget his name? [*Takes a letter from his pocket, but hastily puts it up again.*] O, it contains some very interesting news. [*Peter steals it out of his pocket.*] The world will be astonished when the contents of that letter come to be made public, and few of the great folks who are concerned will ever suppose that old Bitterman had a hand in it.

BETTY. No; I think not indeed.

BITTERMAN. Well, I must go and get the Chinese bridge repaired again, in case the Countess should signify her pleasure to —

D 4

BETTY.

BETTY. To bathe also.

BITTERMAN. No, no; we'll take care to fasten it securely. Miss, I am your very humble servant.

[Exit.

BETTY. [*Haughtily.*] Your servant.

PETER. [*Opening the letter.*] Now for this important letter from France! Lord, why it is from my uncle, I declare!

BETTY. Your uncle! Who is he?

PETER. Bless me, Miss! why don't you know him? Fumble the taylor, who lives in town.

BETTY. Your uncle a taylor! Ha! ha! ha! My father was state coachman.

[Exit consequentially.

PETER. Well, and no such great things neither. But, dear me! why should papa say that this letter came from France? Humph! What will he get by that story I wonder.

[Exit.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

S C E N E I.

[*The STRANGER sitting on a Bench before his Cottage,
[reading. JOHN enters from the House.]*

JOHN. **D**INNER is ready, Sir,

STRANGER. I shall eat nothing.

JOHN. Nice young peas, and a roast duck.

STRANGER. You may eat them yourself, if you please.

JOHN. You are not hungry, Sir?

STRANGER. No.

JOHN. The heat of the weather *does* take away one's appetite, I think.

STRANGER. Yes.

JOHN. I will put the duck by. Perhaps at supper—

STRANGER. Perhaps.

JOHN. [*After a pause.*] Gracious Sir, may I speak?

STRANGER. Speak.

JOHN. You have done a noble action.

STRANGER. What?

JOHN. You have saved a man's life.

STRANGER. Peace.

JOHN. Do you know who it was, Sir?

STRANGER. No.

JOHN. The Count of Wintersee.

STRANGER. 'Tis all one to me who he was.

JOHN. Really, Sir, such deeds draw tears into old eyes.

STRANGER.

STRANGER. Old women's.

JOHN. You are a brave and noble master.

STRANGER. What! do you flatter me? Begone!

JOHN. Upon my soul it comes from my heart. When I see the good that you do, and how readily you make the danger and misery of others your own, and yet enjoy not peace of mind yourself, my heart bleeds for you.

STRANGER. Thank you, John. [*Softened.*]

JOHN. Dear Sir, don't take amiss what I say. Perhaps too thick blood is the cause of your melancholy—I once heard a great physician say, that the disposition to hate mankind was often to be traced to the state of the blood, the nerves, or the bowels.

STRANGER. That is not my case, good John.

JOHN. Unfortunate, perhaps. And yet so good! What pity!

STRANGER. I suffer innocently.

JOHN. My poor master!

STRANGER. Have you forgot what the old man said this morning? "There is still another and a better world!" Let us hope, and suffer with fortitude!

JOHN. Amen!

SCENE II.

BETTY, STRANGER, JOHN.

BETTY. With submission, Sir; pray are you the gentleman that took his Grace out of the water? [*Stranger stares at her, but answers not.*] Or [*to John*] are you the gentleman. [*John makes no answer, but looks discomposed at her.*] Are these gentlemen both dumb? Well, this is very droll, I declare. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, gentlemen, help me to laugh, however. No, not a muscle moved. A couple of wax figures sure. I may laugh, or I may cry, or I may halloo, or I may sigh; 'twill move them just as little. Perhaps the humorous Mr. Bitterman has been trimming a couple of trees into statues. [*Approaches John.*] No. This lives, and breathes, and rolls his eyes. [*Bawling in his ear.*] My friend!

JOHN. I'm not deaf.

BETTY. No, nor dumb neither, as I find at last. Is that inanimate person there your master?

JOHN. That worthy gentleman is my master.

BETTY. The same that——

JOHN. The same.

BETTY. [*Turning to the Stranger.*] His Grace the Count of Wintersee, and her Grace the Countess, send their compliments to you, and desire the favour of your company to sup with them at the Castle.

STRANGER. I don't eat suppers.

BETTY. Well, you'll come, however.

STRANGER. No.

BETTY. I hope you will not send me back in this manner. No message! His Grace the Count is penetrated with sentiments of gratitude. You have saved his life.

STRANGER. I did it with pleasure.

BETTY. And would you not allow him to thank you?

STRANGER. No.

BETTY. Really, Sir, I must say 'tis very uncivil of you. There are three gentlewomen of us in the Castle, and we all long very much to know who you are.

[*The Stranger goes off without answering her.*]

BETTY. The master is an ill-mannered fellow. I must see what is to be done with the man. [*John turns his back upon her.*] The beginning promises but little. I say, friend! why don't you look at me?

JOHN. Because I prefer looking on green trees to looking on green eyes.

BETTY. Green eyes, impudence! Who told you I had green eyes? I have had verses made upon my eyes, Mr. Boor. I care very little, however, about your opinion. But if you won't look at me, you may speak to me at least.

JOHN. I never talk to monkies.

BETTY. Hark'ye friend. Suppose you had a chain
put

put about you, and were to be shown for money, like a great bear as you are? So rude and savage a creature is not seen every day. 'Twould be quite a rare sight for the country bumpkins. But you must know, Sir, that I am of a good family, and have had an education that teaches me to despise such insults.

JOHN. I am glad of it.

BETTY. In short, Sir, I desire you will tell me what your master is?

JOHN. A man.

BETTY. Why to be sure he is no woman, or he would have more civility; nor would he be waited on by such a clown as you. But what is his name?

JOHN. The same as his father's.

BETTY. And his father was——

JOHN. Married.

BETTY. [*Ironically.*] To a woman, I suppose.

JOHN. You are right.

BETTY. Perhaps in some duel he has killed——

JOHN. A hare.

BETTY. Or has counterfeited——

JOHN. Hearts.

BETTY. Or is a deserter——

JOHN. From his mistress.

BETTY. Or perhaps he is——

JOHN. A jesuit.

BETTY. [*Enraged.*] Well, I suppose it will be impossible to find out who your master is; and I don't now care much about it. But I know what you are.

JOHN. What?

BETTY. A great blockhead. [*Runs away.*]

JOHN. Thank you. Thus it is. He who complies with every thing that a woman desires, is *un homme comme il faut*; and he who will not allow her to make a fool of him is sure to be called a blockhead. But in this case they are mistaken.

S C E N E III.

STRANGER, JOHN.

STRANGER. Is that woman gone?

JOHN. Yes.

STRANGER. John!

JOHN. Sir.

STRANGER. We must be gone too.

JOHN. Whither?

STRANGER. Heaven knows.

JOHN. I'll attend you, Sir.

STRANGER. What, any where?

JOHN. To death.

STRANGER. Would it were the will of Heaven!
There is peace.

JOHN. Peace is every where. Let the storm blow about us, so the heart be but calm! And in that case too this spot is as good as any other corner of the world. The situation is delightful. Nature seems to court our eyes as well as our taste.

STRANGER. But I'm no monster to be gazed at.

JOHN. There again! What false constructions you put on every thing. It does not appear to me a very strange thing, that a man, whose life you have preserved, should invite you to supper.

STRANGER. But I will not be invited.

JOHN. You might make yourself easy. They would not ask you a second time.

STRANGER. Coxcombs! they fancy that they have recompensed a man for the most essential services, if they but allow him the honour to eat with them.

JOHN. And you are right, Sir. Better feed on potatoes at home, than pay the tax of flattery for every mouthful, and be forced to laugh at every paltry pun or dull jest, or blast the fair fame of an absent friend.

STRANGER.

STRANGER. No, no; we will be gone.

JOHN. Patience, gracious master! Perhaps this bustle may pass over without our removing. This family is come from town, and will soon be tired of the simple face of rustic nature. Here they will find no cards nor masquerades, unless they have brought them with them. These, Sir, you will perceive are the drones of a court, that have flown from their hives to gather honey here in the solitude. But they will follow the fashion; when Autumn approaches they will all fly back again, and resume their proper stations.

STRANGER. Your jest becomes bitter.

JOHN. And bitter is the relish of many a dish.

STRANGER. Nor is it unlikely, that when the object of your sarcastic remarks shall be removed from your sight, you may aim your shafts of satire against your master. I did not know all your talents, I find.

JOHN. Again, misanthropy and distrust! Dear master, I wish to serve you with all my soul. I will require no wages, so you will but think me an honest faithful fellow.

STRANGER. What, serve me without wages! Ah, then your *honesty* may perhaps be taxed at least to the amount of your wages.

JOHN. That is cruelty, Sir.

STRANGER. Do I wrong you?

JOHN. Indeed you do.

STRANGER. I did not mean it. You are my only friend.

JOHN. That appellation makes me ample amends.

STRANGER. Look, John! Are not those gawdy dresses in yonder walk moving this way? I must be gone. I can stay here no longer.

JOHN. Only till I have packed up my bundle.

STRANGER. The sooner the better then. To think that on this fine health-bestowing day I must be shut up within four walls to be freed from the sight of these gaping fools. Nay, if they have the true impertinence of thorough-

thorough-paced courtiers they will make no scruple of thrusting themselves into my room. [*Going.*] John, I shall bolt my door on the inside. [*Exit.*]

JOHN. And I will stand sentry without. If the master and mistress now be as impertinently inquisitive as the chambermaid, I must again summon a stock of impudence to my aid. They may question me, but they will get little information; for I know nothing myself.

S C E N E IV.

COUNTESS, MAJOR, JOHN.

COUNTESS. Look! Is not that some strange face? Perhaps the servant.

MAJOR. My friend, can we see your master?

JOHN. No.

MAJOR. But for a few minutes.

JOHN. He has locked himself in.

COUNTESS. Tell him that it is a lady who waits upon him.

JOHN. Then he will doubly-lock his door.

COUNTESS. Does he then hate our sex?

JOHN. He hates mankind in general, and your sex in particular.

COUNTESS. On what ground?

JOHN. Perhaps he has been deceived.

COUNTESS. Ay, but it is not gallant——

JOHN. Gallant my master is not; but if the life of a fellow-creature be in danger, he will risk his own to save it.

MAJOR. That is of more worth than empty courtesy. True, my friend; but it is no business of gallantry that brings us here. The wife and brother of the gentleman whose life your master preserved wish to make their acknowledgments to him for so signal an obligation.

JOHN. That is what he utterly dislikes.

MAJOR. A singular kind of man——

JOHN.

JOHN. Who has but one wish; and that is, to live in peace.

COUNTESS. He seems to have fallen out with the world.

JOHN. So it seems, indeed.

COUNTESS. Perhaps a point of honour; or some unfortunate love attachment?

JOHN. It may be so.

COUNTESS. Or he is the victim of fancy?

JOHN. It may be so.

COUNTESS. Be that as it may, I wish very much to know who he is.

JOHN. So do I.

COUNTESS. How! Do you not know him?

JOHN. O yes! I know him; that is, his proper self; his heart and soul. Do you believe, lady, that to be acquainted with a man's name—is to know him.

COUNTESS. Excellent! You begin to be interesting; and now I should be glad to cultivate your acquaintance. Pray what are you, Sir?

JOHN. Your humble servant.

[Exit.

SCENE V.

COUNTESS, MAJOR.

COUNTESS. A whimsical fellow that, who affects singularity! All men would wish to be distinguished in some way or other; one circumnavigates the globe; another conceals himself in a cottage.

MAJOR. And the servant apes his master.

COUNTESS. Come, brother; let us seek the Count. He proposed walking across the fields with Mrs. Miller.

MAJOR. Two words before we go.—Sister—I'm in love.

COUNTESS. How many fits does this make?

MAJOR. 'Tis the first time in my life.

COUNTESS. I give you joy.

MAJOR.

MAJOR. Hitherto you have evaded my importunity. Who is this Mrs. Miller? I beseech you, sister, be serious; this is no time for levity.

COUNTESS. Goodness! Why you look as if you were about to raise a spirit. Don't roll your eyes about so wildly, and look so terrifying at me. I will obey you immediately.—To be serious, then, about the most silly thing in the world, love! Who Mrs. Miller is, I have already said I do not know. But what I know concerning her I will impart to you. One evening, some three years since, a female stranger was announced to me as requesting an audience. The request was granted, and Mrs. Miller entered my room with that elegant delicacy of manner which has since captivated you. Her air, however, betrayed symptoms of confusion and anxiety, affections that seem now softened down into an interesting melancholy. Throwing herself at my feet, she entreated me in the most earnest manner to save an unfortunate woman who was on the verge of despair. She talked of having heard me well spoken of, and tendered me her services as a waiting-maid. In vain I sought to learn the source of her sufferings. She veiled the secret; but every day disclosed an understanding most highly cultivated, and a heart formed to be virtue's shrine. I forbore to press her on the point she wished to avoid; but I soon took off her servitude and made her my friend. Bearing me company one day in a ride to the Castle, I read in her eyes the delight which she enjoyed in viewing the natural beauties of the place. I made her the offer of residing here, and regulating the affairs of the household. She took my hand, pressed it to her lips with uncommon warmth; and her grateful soul was visible through her silent tears. From that period she has resided here, performing, as I understand, innumerable good actions in private; and is almost adored by every being that surrounds her. [*Dropping a courtesy.*] Brother, I have done.

E

MAJOR.

MAJOR. Too little to satisfy my curiosity, yet sufficient to fix my determination. Sister, you must give me your assistance. I will marry her.

COUNTESS. You?

MAJOR. I.

COUNTESS. Baron Horst?

MAJOR. Fie! If I rightly comprehend you.

COUNTESS. Pray, Sir, be not so testy. The immortal principles of the equality of mankind, and so forth, are admirable in a romance; but we do not live as persons in the ideal world. The Baron will take his lady to court; she will not be received. The Baron will wish to leave to his posterity all the privileges of nobility; it will not be allowed.

MAJOR. Preach not to me on such a hackneyed text! I shall but answer that I am in love, passionately in love; and all your scruples must be done away; for love regards neither court nor nobility. I am not like a green inexperienced boy; you see in me a man who——

COUNTESS. Who is going to take a wife.

MAJOR. A man who with mature deliberation has weighed advantage against disadvantage, domestic happiness and a life of peaceful enjoyment against the bubble etiquette. I well know the mutual relations and bonds of civil society: I know and respect them. They were once very necessary establishments, and perhaps are so still; at least I do not desire that on my account one jot of heraldic prejudice should be removed. My wife, therefore, will not appear at court; and the only question to be considered is, whether we shall gain or lose by such a forbearance.

COUNTESS. The lord chamberlain can best inform you as to that particular.

MAJOR. My children, by being kept away from the court, will never feel the want of nobility; that is to say in other words, my sons will never desire to reap where they have not sown; and my daughters, if they do but inherit

hesit the virtues of their mother, will never be at a loss to find husbands worthy of them.

COUNTESS. Especially, if they take pattern from their aunt.

MAJOR. I will fix my abode in the country. My fortune is sufficient. To make those about me happy, requires no title of nobility; and my heart tells me, that to study my own happiness is a duty superior to an attendance on courts. Possessed of a wife like her; in time, perhaps, the happy father of children partaking all her virtues; wealth enough in my possession to make all around me comfortable; what should I wish for more? Or, should you even think me unfit for solitude, and too fond of the charms of society, can I feel ennui, when surrounded by my children; and my wife by my side, or fronting me at my table? Then for friends, have I not a loving, satirical sister, a jovial brother-in-law—? Ha! but perhaps this humble sister-in-law would not suit the Countess!

COUNTESS. You begin to be rude, brother.

MAJOR. Well, I only beg to ask if there be any further bar to my intention.

COUNTESS. Why certainly all that you have been saying is very fine theory; the plan is excellent; but you seem to forget one small, yet rather necessary circumstance.

MAJOR. Which is—

COUNTESS. Whether Mrs. Miller will have you.

MAJOR. 'Tis that very thing, sister, that makes me require your assistance. [*Taking her hand.*] My dear Henrietta, you know my heart, and you know that I am no coxcomb. Bred up in the French service, and mixing occasionally in the society of painted coquettes, I insensibly imbibed a disgust for your sex. At court I found a tedious sameness; and in private families of rank I found, at best, that married people agreed to be civil to each other because it saved appearances, and caressed because it was the custom so to do. Every where I saw pictures

of ennui and repentance; every where vain women and ruined men; silly mothers, and ill-bred children.

COUNTESS. A fine picture truly! but, begging your honour's pardon, drawn by the pencil of Hogarth.—'Tis caricature, brother.

MAJOR. Ah, Henrietta, my own time is come at last.

COUNTESS. You are rightly served. It is only a pity that you should have happened to light on a woman of accomplishments and sensibility. You should have been chained to the triumphal car of a Xantippe.

MAJOR. But that very woman you first described was the only one calculated to subdue this stubborn heart. And now, my dear Henrietta, my sweet sister, who hung with me at the breast of our beloved mother—

COUNTESS. I beg your pardon; I had a wet-nurse.

MAJOR. Cruel raillery!

COUNTESS. Unaccountable man! Why heave these sighs, why whine out unavailing and indiscriminate satire, why harbour unnecessary doubts, at a moment when the most flattering prospect opens before you. Here is my hand. Without pomp or circumlocution, I will do my best to serve you.—But hold! we were near being surprized. They come. Wait patiently the issue of the game, and leave me to manage the cards.

SCENE VI.

EULALIA *led by the COUNT.* COUNTESS, MAJOR.

COUNT. [*To Eulalia.*] By my faith, Madam, you are an excellent walker. You are fit to walk for a wager.

EULALIA. Nothing but the effect of custom, Sir. If you would but for three or four weeks daily undertake such a walk—

COUNT. Why yes; I think I should soon look like one of my own greyhounds.

COUNTESS. Where have you been? We have been seeking you.

COUNT.

COUNT. Where have we been ! I declare to you, my dear, that when I walk with Mrs. Miller, I can seldom say where I am.

EULALIA. I accompanied the Count to the hill, from the top of which is a bird's eye view of the whole valley, and of the river that meanders through it.

COUNT. Yes, the view indeed is beautiful ; and every charm of nature is heightened by the poetical and picturesque manner in which Mrs. Miller describes it. But, with her pardon, she will never get me up there again. My feet are become plaintiffs, and have the clearest cause in the world.

COUNTESS. Then let us go home. The luxury of an easy sofa invites you.

COUNT. The very idea of it is comfortable to me. But I am really so fatigued and so thirsty, that I must make a pause for refreshment. What do you say, brother, to a couple of pipes *, a bottle of fine cyder, and a seat in the alcove ?

COUNTESS. Ay do so. We women will run about a little longer. [*Exchanges a significant look with her brother.*]

MAJOR. [*To the Count.*] Yes ; I will join you.

COUNT. Bravo ! But deuce take it, we have nobody to send now. I cannot bear when I take a walk to have a fellow always lounging behind me : but now I begin to wish that I had taken a servant with me. [*Looking about.*] See ! Is not that Peter in the pear-tree ? Yes, it is. Halloo ! Peter.

PETER. [*From the tree.*] Hey ?

COUNT. Come this way ; and eat more another time.

PETER. [*Coming forward.*] Here am I, Sir.

* To the mere English reader this may sound strangely ; but in Germany persons of all ranks are partial to the pleasures of the pipe.

COUNT. Run to the Castle quickly, and bring pipes and a bottle of cyder with you. *Filled pipes for us, d'ye hear?*

PETER. Filled pipes for *us*. O yes, I hear. [*Exit.*]

COUNT. Come, brother, we will look out for a comfortable seat. The ladies don't seem inclined to follow us. Their delicate nostrils cannot endure the scent of tobacco. [*Exit.*] [*The Major follows him after having exchanged glances with his sister.*]

SCENE VII.

COUNTESS, EULALIA.

COUNTESS. Well, my dear Mrs. Miller, how do you like the gentleman who left us just now?

EULALIA. Whom, Madam?

COUNTESS. E'en my loving brother.

EULALIA. He deserves to be your brother.

COUNTESS. [*Drops a low courtesy.*] Your humble servant. That was very politely said. I shall enter it in my memoranda.

EULALIA. Without flattery, Madam, he is a noble gentleman.

COUNTESS. And a handsome man.

EULALIA. [*With indifference.*] Y—es..

COUNTESS. [*Imitating.*] Y—es! I declare that was almost as bad saying No. But I can tell you, Mrs. Miller, he thinks you a handsome woman. [*Eulalia smiles.*] But you say nothing to this.

EULALIA. What should I say? Insult cannot pollute your lips. It may be a jest; but I am ill suited to carry on a jest.

COUNTESS. As little as to be made the subject of one. No, I was serious, I assure you. What say you now?

EULALIA. Indeed, Countess, you make me blush. I will not, however, play the prude. There was a time,
I own,

I own, when I fancied myself handsome; but grief has destroyed the bloom that flattered me. The sweetest charms that can o'erspread the female face must take their rise in a guiltless heart; the countenance, to attract the heart of a worthy man, must be the mirror of an un-sullied mind.

COUNTESS. I only pray that God may preserve my soul as pure as that which beams from your eyes.

EULALIA. [*Wildly and rapidly.*] Ah! Heaven forbid!

COUNTESS. [*Astonished.*] How!

EULALIA. [*Endeavouring to hide her tears.*] Excuse me, gracious lady! I am an unfortunate woman!—Three dreadful years of suffering do not, indeed, give me any claim to the friendship of such a soul as your's; but to compassion let me hope—Pray, pardon me! [*Is going.*]

COUNTESS. Stay, dear Mrs. Miller, really you must stay. [*Mildly.*] What I have to tell you may be worth your hearing. Your involuntary remarks have not alarmed me! You seem like Pascal, who thought he saw a hell beside his chair; but the fiends exist only in your imagination.

EULALIA. Would to God I saw that hell only beside my chair. Ah! the hell I feel is in my bosom.

COUNTESS. Friendship has a balm for many wounds. Now for the first time let me entreat your confidence. In the three years that we have been acquainted, I never yet troubled you with any impertinent curiosity. This day a laudable motive obliges me to it. Behold an affectionate sister soliciting your confidence. My brother loves you.

EULALIA. [*Shocked, and regarding the Countess with serious and anxious looks.*] For a jest this is too serious; and should it be truth, 'twere too painful to endure.

COUNTESS. Allow me, before I proceed farther, to sketch you the character of my brother; and I give you my word, that no improper colour shall be given to it

COUNT. Run to the Castle quickly, and bring pipes and a bottle of cyder with you. *Filled pipes for us, d'ye hear?*

PETER. *Filled pipes for us.* O yes, I hear. [*Exit.*]

COUNT. Come, brother, we will look out for a comfortable seat. The ladies don't seem inclined to follow us. Their delicate nostrils cannot endure the scent of tobacco. [*Exit.*] [*The Major follows him after having exchanged glances with his sister.*]

SCENE VII.

COUNTESS, EULALIA.

COUNTESS. Well, my dear Mrs. Miller, how do you like the gentleman who left us just now?

EULALIA. Whom, Madam?

COUNTESS. E'en my loving brother.

EULALIA. He deserves to be your brother.

COUNTESS. [*Drops a low courtesy.*] Your humble servant. That was very politely said. I shall enter it in my memoranda.

EULALIA. Without flattery, Madam, he is a noble gentleman.

COUNTESS. And a handsome man.

EULALIA. [*With indifference.*] Y—es..

COUNTESS. [*Imitating.*] Y—es! I declare that was almost as bad saying No. But I can tell you, Mrs. Miller, he thinks you a handsome woman. [*Eulalia smiles.*] But you say nothing to this.

EULALIA. What should I say? Insult cannot pollute your lips. It may be a jest; but I am ill suited to carry on a jest.

COUNTESS. As little as to be made the subject of one. No, I was serious, I assure you. What say you now?

EULALIA. Indeed, Countess, you make me blush. I will not, however, play the prude. There was a time,
I own,

I own, when I fancied myself handsome; but grief has destroyed the bloom that flattered me. The sweetest charms that can o'erspread the female face must take their rise in a guiltless heart; the countenance, to attract the heart of a worthy man, must be the mirror of an un-sullied mind.

COUNTESS. I only pray that God may preserve my soul as pure as that which beams from your eyes.

EULALIA. [*Wildly and rapidly.*] Ah! Heaven forbid!

COUNTESS. [*Astonished.*] How!

EULALIA. [*Endeavouring to hide her tears.*] Excuse me, gracious lady! I am an unfortunate woman!—Three dreadful years of suffering do not, indeed, give me any claim to the friendship of such a soul as your's; but to compassion let me hope—Pray, pardon me! [*Is going.*]

COUNTESS. Stay, dear Mrs. Miller, really you must stay. [*Mildly.*] What I have to tell you may be worth your hearing. Your involuntary remarks have not alarmed me! You seem like Pascal, who thought he saw a hell beside his chair; but the fiends exist only in your imagination.

EULALIA. Would to God I saw that hell only beside my chair. Ah! the hell I feel is in my bosom.

COUNTESS. Friendship has a balm for many wounds. Now for the first time let me entreat your confidence. In the three years that we have been acquainted, I never yet troubled you with any impertinent curiosity. This day a laudable motive obliges me to it. Behold an affectionate sister soliciting your confidence. My brother loves you.

EULALIA. [*Shocked, and regarding the Countess with serious and anxious looks.*] For a jest this is too serious; and should it be truth, 'twere too painful to endure.

COUNTESS. Allow me, before I proceed farther, to sketch you the character of my brother; and I give you my word, that no improper colour shall be given to it

from being drawn by the hand of a sister. You might, perhaps, be led to doubt of his prudence; for though he saw you for the first time only this very day, he is already in love. But, my friend, he is a steady man, and of the purest principles. The ladies at our court had, indeed, considered him as a sworn enemy to marriage; for among them he found not what he sought, and seemed at last to have despaired of its existence. Not beauty, birth, nor fortune, was his choice; he sought a heart formed by nature, a mind made perfect by education; of both he saw proofs in you. Your benevolence, though exercised in private, could not be concealed; and for your understanding—I revere that modest suffusion—my brother is a connoisseur in that point.—I pledge you my honour and friendship.—’Tis for you to determine whether I am entitled to your confidence. Disclose to me your condition; you will hazard nothing. Ah, pour your griefs as into the bosom of a sister!

EULALIA. [*Aside.*] Alas! I feel that the worthiest sacrifice true repentance can offer, is an open confession to a generous mind. That sacrifice will I offer.—Have I then suffered according to my deserts? [*To the Countess in a faltering voice.*] Did your Grace never hear—pardon, pray pardon me—Did you never hear—[*Now aside.*] O! it is terrible in one moment to destroy a delusion, to which alone I have hitherto been indebted for her goodness. But it must be.—Fie Eulalia! Does pride become you?—[*To the Countess.*] Did your Grace never hear of a certain lady Meinau?

COUNTESS. At the neighbouring court? I think I have heard of such a creature. She made an excellent husband most miserable.

EULALIA. Yes. My God! how excellent a husband!

COUNTESS. She eloped with a vagabond villain.

EULALIA. Yes. She did so. [*Throws herself in utter confusion and distress at the feet of the Countess.*]

Thou noble lady! do not abandon me. Give me but a poor corner wherein I may die.

COUNTESS. For Heaven's sake, are you —— ?

EULALIA. I am that wretched creature.

COUNTESS. Ha! [*Turning away disdainfully; but having gone a few steps seems to relent, and returns.*] But she is unfortunate, and severely she suffers. Reason, proud reason, away! Thou art ever ready to pronounce sentence on those who have erred. [*Looks sorrowfully at her.*] Alas! how unhappy!—Pray rise. The Count and my brother are not far off; and such a scene as this admits not of unnecessary witnesses. I promise you secrecy.

[*Raises her.*]

EULALIA. Ah! conscience, conscience, thou wilt never be silent. [*Takes the Countess's hand and presses it between her's.*] Pray, pray do not abandon me!

COUNTESS. No; I will not abandon you. Though your exemplary conduct for these three years past, your secret grief, your genuine repentance, may not, perhaps, in the eye of stern morality, have cancelled your crime; yet my heart cannot refuse you an asylum; a refuge wherein you may undisturbed deplore the loss of your matchless husband:—too much I fear an irrecoverable loss!

EULALIA. [*With subdued expression of despair.*] Irrecoverable!

COUNTESS. Poor woman! My heart bleeds for her.

EULALIA. [*In the same tone as before.*] I had children too!

COUNTESS. Oh, 'tis too much!

EULALIA. God knows whether they are dead or alive.

COUNTESS. Poor mother!

EULALIA. I had a most amiable husband.

COUNTESS. Pray compose yourself.

EULALIA. God only knows too whether he be living or dead.

COUNTESS. Her looks become terrifying.

EULALIA,

EULALIA. To me he is dead !

COUNTESS. She suffers dreadfully.

EULALIA. I had an aged father too.

COUNTESS. For the love of God, no more !

EULALIA. His grief for my crime killed him.

COUNTESS. How horribly does injured virtue avenge itself !

EULALIA. [*Bursting at last into tears, and hiding her face in her hands.*] And I live still !

COUNTESS. Who could cast off or hate such a sufferer ? [*Embracing Eulalia.*] No, you are not so wholly criminal. The moment of your error was a dream, an infatuation, an insanity.

EULALIA. O spare me ! spare me ! Did you but know that every extenuation of my crime is a fresh dagger to me ! that my conscience never torments me more than when my mind is seeking for excuses ! No ; for me there is no excuse, no pardon upon earth ! The barren comfort that alone is left me is, to declare my guilt without hope of relief.

COUNTESS. This is indeed a true repentance.

EULALIA. O had you known my husband ! When for the first time I beheld him, a handsome, noble gentleman, I had scarcely passed fourteen years of my life.

COUNTESS. And your nuptials——

EULALIA. Took place a few months after.

COUNTESS. Your flight——

EULALIA. But two years subsequent to my marriage.

COUNTESS. Your inexperience, not your heart, led you into the error.

EULALIA. Just so would my reason plead for me in those hours when love and anxious desire triumph over repentance. But 'twill not avail. My inexperience or my youth do not excuse me. [*Casts her eyes to Heaven.*] Best of Fathers ! *that* were to charge you with neglect. You imprinted in my tender heart principles of virtue
and

and honour, you warned me against the poison of flattery and seduction, you educated me——

COUNTESS. Alas ! what is education's force against the wiles of a Lovelace ?

EULALIA. Ah, madam, you touch on a strange incomprehensibility in my sad history. No, this man was no Lovelace. In person, in manners, in all respects he was much inferior to my husband. Only this, that my husband did not cherish and flatter every humour and idle whim of mine, and that he refused me new equipages, liveries, and other extravagancies, when the expence exceeded our means. But these were all offered me by the serpent tongue of my seducer ; and I was child enough to be pleased with the gaudy prospect. I forsook children, husband, and father, to follow a wretch, who——but enough !—I will not curse him—he is now before the dread tribunal of God, and my murdered virtue will fill up the dreadful measure of his guilt.

COUNTESS. Horrible ! but, with a heart so sensitive, my friend could not long have persisted in her error.

EULALIA. Too long ever to atone for it. The delusion, indeed, vanished in a few weeks. I raved on the name of my dear, my noble husband—but in vain. I listened after the prattling of my children—alas, in vain. When the mist was dispelled from my eyes, how agonizing were my feelings !

COUNTESS. Forbear the recollection. I anticipate the sequel of your history. You left your seducer ?

EULALIA. I did, and flew to a generous hospitable lady, who assigned me a retreat wherein I might weep, and will allow me a place wherein I may die.

COUNTESS. [*Embracing her.*] Here on my bosom shall your tears in future flow. And would to Heaven I could induce you to encourage hope, most amiable sufferer !

EULALIA. Ah no, no, no. I dare not hope.

COUNTESS. Have you heard nothing of your husband since that fatal period ?

EULALIA.

EULALIA. No. He left town, but no one could tell whither he went.

COUNTESS. And your children?

EULALIA. He took them with him.

COUNTESS. We must make inquiries; we must—
Stay, here is my husband: and my brother with him.
Ah! poor brother, I had forgot him entirely. Quick!
dear Mrs. Milier, put on a better face.

S C E N E VIII.

[*The COUNT and the MAJOR enter; a little after PETER comes in. All three smoking. PETER remains for some time in the back ground.*]

COUNT. Well, ladies; I think it grows chilly. Let us go home.

COUNTESS. 'Tis scarcely six o'clock.

COUNT. 'Tis time for tea, however. And do you suppose, because I have been a soldier, that I have not had fatigue enough to day? What with the journey from town; the cold bath at Bitterman's rotten bridge; the forced march under command of Mrs. Miller—

COUNTESS. Well, well; we are ready.

COUNT. Here, Peter, take these pipes away. Why, zounds! do *you* smoke?

PETER. To be sure I do. But I have had plague enough to do it.

COUNT. Why, who the devil ordered you?

PETER. Your Grace ordered me.

COUNT. I?

PETER. Yes; did not your Grace tell me to fetch pipes for *us*?

COUNT. Well, for me and the Major.

PETER. Ay, and I was there too.

COUNT. You are a comical dog, Mr. Peter. Come. But, a-propos! how is the Stranger? Will he come?

COUNTESS. No. He gave Betty a flat refusal.

COUNT.

COUNT. He is an extraordinary man ! But it must not rest there. I must and will make my acknowledgments some how or other. Ill'tell you what, Major ; you must do me a favour. See my wife home, and then return and bring the Stranger with you.

MAJOR. If you think it will be of any avail, I will do it with great pleasure.

COUNT. It is certainly no more than right that I should do something for him in return for an act that preserved my existence. [*Offers his arm to Eulalia ; the*
[Major tenders his to the Countess ; and they go out.

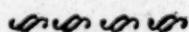
S C E N E. IX.

PETER. *alone.* [*He throws his pipe away in a passion.*] Well now I will be judged by any reasonable Christian, whether when I and two other persons are together, and a Count says, "Fetch pipes for us," I a'nt one of us ? I wonder indeed how I came to be such a good-natured fool ! I never smoked in my life before, and now only did it to oblige the Count—Pshah, how it tastes ; I declare I am quite squeamish after it.

[*Exit.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.



S C E N E I.

[*The STRANGER's Cottage. JOHN enters from the Cottage with a piece of bread and cheese in his hand, of which he now and then cuts a morsel.*]

JOHN. **W**HEN I was waiter at a coffee-house in town, I was a dashing fellow. Cards and dice were my diversion from morning to night. I had the most delicate viands and the best-flavoured wines at command whenever I chose to visit the pantry or the cellar. And yet I found no enjoyment. To the viands the salt of mental satisfaction was wanting; and to the wine the zest of a sound conscience. How different have been my feelings since I have served my present master! I have done no act to-day of which I ought to be ashamed; I have performed faithfully my daily duty; and I can find pleasure enough in a bread and cheese meal. [*Sees the Major at a distance.*] Plague on't, that I must be again disturbed. I thought to have enjoyed my supper in the open air; but they hunt us like blood-hounds.

MAJOR, JOHN.

MAJOR. Well, my friend!

JOHN. [*Aside.*] How the title of friend is abused!

MAJOR. I must see your master.

JOHN. I cannot serve you, Sir.

MAJOR. Why so?

JOHN. I am forbidden to disturb him.

MAJOR.

MAJOR. [*Offers him money.*] Here; take this, and announce me.

JOHN. I want no money.

MAJOR. I did not mean to offend; but pray announce me.

JOHN. I will, Sir; but what good end can it answer? I shall be scolded, and you will be denied.

MAJOR. Perhaps not. Tell him that I only ask one minute's conversation; that I will not be troublesome; in short, say any thing that you may think likely to prevail with him. If your master be a gentleman, or a man of education, he will not suffer me to wait for him outside the door.

JOHN. Well, Sir, I will try the experiment.

MAJOR. Observe, I only beg for half a minute.

JOHN. Very well, Sir. [*Enters the Cottage.*]

MAJOR. Now if he should come, I know not well how I ought to address him. In all my intercourse with the world, I never yet met with a misanthrope. Knigge * has written a treatise on the Conversation of Men; but he forgot to prescribe to us a mode of conducting ourselves with a man to whom the whole world is hateful, and himself a burthen. Well, I must leave it to chance. An open candid countenance, and a deportment neither too reserved nor too assuming, makes in general the best impression.

S C E N E II.

The STRANGER, MAJOR.

STRANGER. What are your commands?

MAJOR. Pardon, me, Sir. [*Recollecting himself suddenly.*] Meinau!

STRANGER. Horst! [*They embrace.*]

MAJOR. And is it really you, my friend?

MEINAU. It is me.

* A German writer.

MAJOR. My God ! How grief has altered you !

MEINAU. The hand of affliction lies heavily on me. But how came you hither ? What want you ?

MAJOR. How astonishing is all this ! I came here ruminating in what manner I should address a solitary stranger ; and when he appears, I find in him the friend of my heart, the brave Meinau.

STRANGER. Have you not been in pursuit of me ? Did you really not know that *I* was the inhabitant of this cottage ?

MAJOR. As little as I know who lives on the top of Caucasus. You have this morning saved the life of my brother-in-law ; and a grateful family wish much to receive you into their friendly circle. This you refused to-day to the waiting-maid of my sister ; to give the invitation perhaps a greater weight, I was desired to come myself. See now the opportunity which chance has afforded of giving me back a friend, of whom my heart has been so long deprived, and of whose counsel and assistance I stand at present so much in need.

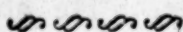
MEINAU. Yes, I am your friend ; your sincere friend.—You are a good fellow—a dear friend. My heart is firmly attached to you.—But if this assurance be pleasing to you——Horst ! you will leave me now, and never return hither.

MAJOR. All I see is a mystery, and all I hear from you a riddle to me. It is you. It is my Meinau that stands before me. But those are not the happy cheerful features that once so captivated our gay French women ; that brought mirth into every company where you came, and acquired you friends before you had opened your mouth.

MEINAU. You forget that I am grown seven years older.

MAJOR. You are then but two-and-thirty.—But why do you turn thus from me ? Is the face of a friend become disgusting to you ? or dare you not let your eye
be

A C T V.

SCENE I. *A Room in the Castle.*COUNT. [*Walking about and killing Flies.*]

FORMERLY I was wont to take the field against men; but now I war only with flies: both, however, are troublesome vermin. I opened the campaign to-day merely for want of pastime, as many great folks before me have done when without better employment. The Emperor Domitian killed flies as well as myself, and the whole world laughs at him for it: but though the Emperor Charlemagne killed men as if they were flies, merely because they would not cross themselves and pray exactly as he thought proper to do, nobody laughs at him, though to me the one appears full as ridiculous as t'other. Good Domitian, may your ashes rest in peace! The souls of the slaughtered flies will never haunt you. That Emperor is blest who stays at home and kills only flies.

S C E N E II.

BITTERMAN, COUNT.

BITTERMAN. I have the honour to inform your Grace, that supper is on the table.

COUNT. What is there for supper?

BITTERMAN. In the first place, there are delicate chickens, and young green peas as sweet as sugar; then there is a pike as long as a whale; a roast capon as tender as milk-pap, and craw-fish as large as turtles.

COUNT. My good Bitterman, you may set out the table with never so many dishes, but you will not raise

G

my

my appetite unless men be added. Sleep alone I can, in case of necessity ; but to eat alone is impossible. The more people I see sitting around me, the fuller they swell their cheeks, the more eagerly they fall to, the higher relish has every thing to me.

BITTERMAN. Why then, I would recommend to your Grace my Peter. He always falls to as if he would devour the dishes with the victuals.

COUNT. Why are my family still absent ? Is Mrs. Miller still in fits ?

BITTERMAN. As well as I could discover by listening through the key-hole, she is come to herself again. What a fuss is made about a run-away Madam ! They sent for hartshorn, smelling-bottles, and salts. Poor Mrs. Betty has been driven up stairs and down till I dare say she can hardly feel her pretty legs. A pail of water dashed in the face is the best remedy for fainting fits. I can but wonder to see her Grace the Countess and the Right Honourable Major so anxious about her, and as attentive to her as if she actually belonged to your Grace's own illustrious family.

COUNT. [*Smiling.*] Why who knows but—

BITTERMAN. Upon my soul, I believe if an old poor honest faithful servant, who had for twenty years had the honour of waiting upon your Grace, were to have the misfortune to faint, not half this piece of work would be made.

COUNT. Really, so I think.

BITTERMAN. And yet, bless my soul, nobody knows who this woman is. I have written ever so many letters, received God knows how many answers, but none of my correspondents can give me any satisfactory information.

COUNT. I'll tell you what, Bitterman ; take my advice.

BITTERMAN. [*Eagerly.*] My lord, I'm all attention.

COUNT. I conclude, from the circumstance that occurred to-day, that Mrs. Miller and the Stranger are well

well known to each other. Now, if you could only contrive to get better information concerning the Stranger——

BITTERMAN. Ah, Sir, [*Sorrowfully*] have not I taken the greatest pains about it? For these four months all my thoughts have been employed upon it; but darkness and thick clouds hang over him; and without vanity I may say, that what I cannot fathom must lie pretty deep. I have my correspondents every where; and then I have such a manner of circulating a secret: with my letters about me, I sometimes stop people in the streets to read them; sometimes I read them in the steward's room, and I might just as well publish them in a church.

COUNT. Ay, and if you should not happen to receive any letters you can forge some yourself.

BITTERMAN. Sometimes, please your Grace: correspondents are sometimes negligent.

S C E N E III:

MAJOR, COUNT, BITTERMAN.

COUNT. [*Walking up to MAJOR.*] Well, here comes somebody at last, who will assist in the attack upon crawfish as big as turtles. But, good heaven! what a miserable countenance! Come brother, a glass of burgundy after your fright.

MAJOR. Excuse me, Sir, I can neither eat nor drink.

COUNT. I must have you know, that of all things in the world I most hate to have those about me who cannot be happy and cheerful. If I were a king, my chief pleasure would be to make all my subjects happy; and he that would not be made so should quit my dominions.

MAJOR. Then you would force people to be cheerful only because you dislike to have dismal faces about you.

COUNT. Certainly.

MAJOR. A very selfish principle.

COUNT. Ah my good brother, we are all egotists in a greater or less degree: one lets his egotism go naked in the world, another cloaks it; that's all the difference.

MAJOR. O I am not in a humour to dispute with you about it.

COUNT. Another time then, over a bottle. A-propos: How is Mrs. Miller?

MAJOR. A-propos! An excellent a-propos, to be sure.

COUNT. Well then, without a-propos, how is she?

MAJOR. She is recovered.

COUNT. Will she come to supper?

MAJOR. No.

COUNT. The Countess will, however.

MAJOR. I have my doubts about that.

COUNT. Why then, the deuce take you all! Come, Bitterman, you shall sit down at my table, and read two or three of your letters to me.

BITTERMAN. At your Grace's pleasure. [*Exeunt*

[COUNT and BITTERMAN.]

MAJOR. [*Contemplating.*] Delusive hope! Thou airy vision of blissful futurity, I open my arms to embrace thee, and thou fadest from my sight! Hapless Horst! The silver thread is broken. She is the wife of your friend. Well, I will confute the Count's philosophy by deeds, and not by shallow argument. I cannot be happy myself; but it is, perhaps, in my power to re-unite two noble souls that peevish fortune had contrived to separate. Courage, Horst! 'tis the part of a poor mean soul to lament over an abortive design. A man subdues by energy the despair that would sink him,

SCENE IV.

COUNTESS, EULALIA, MAJOR.

COUNTESS. Let us go, my dear friend, and try the air of the gardens.

EULALIA. I am now well—If you would but make yourself entirely easy about me—[*Entreating.*]—If you were but to leave me quite to myself—

MAJOR. By no means, lady; the time is very precious. He will depart to-morrow. Let us think of means for reconciling you with your husband.

EULALIA.

EULALIA. How, Major! you seem to be acquainted with my history.

MAJOR. I am, Madam. Meinau was my most intimate friend from infancy. In the army we served together from ensign to captain. For seven years we had been separated. Accident brought us together to-day, and his noble heart disburdened itself to me.

EULALIA. Now feel I how dreadful it is to be unable to endure the sight of an honest man. O Countess! hide me from myself. [*Hides her face in the bosom of the*
[Countess.

MAJOR. If true repentance of error and a spotless after-conduct do not claim forgiveness from man, what hope have we from God in another world! No, your sufferings have expiated your crime. Virtue slumbered, indeed, and vice for a moment usurped her throne in your heart; but she awoke again, and with a look abashed and banished the usurper for ever. I know my friend well. His soul has the fortitude of a man with the tenderness of a woman. I will hasten to him as your messenger, Madam. With the zeal of the most ardent friendship I will set about this good work, that whenever I may hereafter have cause to look back on my life, I may have one worthy act to rest upon, and to afford comfort to the reflections of my latter days. May our next meeting be more cheerful! [*Going.*

EULALIA. What, Major, are you about to do?—Never; no, never—The honour of my husband is sacred to me. I love him beyond the power of utterance; but I can never be his wife again; not if he were even generous enough to pardon me.

MAJOR. Are you serious, my Lady?

EULALIA. Do not call me by that title, I beg of you. I am no child that shrinks from punishment. What a shadow were my repentance, if it aimed at any other advantage than to lessen the torments of a guilty conscience!

COUNTESS. But if your husband should himself—

EULALIA. That he will not, that he cannot do.

MAJOR. He loves you still.

EULALIA. Then he must cease to love me ; he must banish from his mind a weakness that dishonours him.

MAJOR. Incomprehensible woman ! Then you have no commission at all for me ?

EULALIA. Yes, Major ; I have two favours to ask, both very important to my peace. Often, when grief has led me to despair of all comfort, I have thought that it would afford me some relief, if fate should ever allow me once more to behold my husband, to confess to him my guilt, and then be parted from him for ever. Such is the tendency of my first request : an intercourse for a few moments, if he should not utterly abhor my sight ; but let him never suppose that I design to make the least attempt to beguile him into forgiveness. Let him be assured, that I am determined never to retrieve my honour by the sacrifice of his.—My second request is, to hear something of my children.

MAJOR. If friendship or sacred humanity have any power over him, he will not hesitate a moment to comply with your desires. [*Bows.*] I hasten to my trust.

COUNTESS. Heaven prosper you !

EULALIA. And my prayers ! [*The Major goes out.*]

COUNTESS. Let us take a turn, my dear friend, among the lime-trees, till he returns hither with hope and comfort.

EULALIA. [*Looking wildly.*] How does imagination rack my bosom ! Here my husband, there my children ; on one side, lost happiness and dread of futurity ; on the other, the anxious heavings of maternal tenderness, the solicitude of a mother expecting the long-lost sight of her lovely children. Ah, dear Countess ! there are moments that are equal to years in their effect upon us ; moments which can turn dark hair to grey, and imprint wrinkles in the forehead of youth.

COUNTESS. It is true, grief makes more ravages than old age ; but the moments of which you speak we should endeavour to shun. Let us to the lime-walk. The sun is high setting, and such a scene may tend to sooth the mind,

EULALIA.

EULALIA. Well, be it so; the setting-sun is a suitable scene for the unfortunate.

COUNTESS. Do not forget, however, that reviving morning follows it. [Exeunt.]

S C E N E V.

[MEINAU'S Cottage.]

MAJOR, *solus*.

Never, surely, was so excellent a pair as this! They shall not be separated: No; he must forgive her. The part I have taken upon me, however, is more difficult than I at first thought it. What answer shall I make, if he sets up the phantom honour against my plea, or if he should ask me whether I wish to see him the object of ridicule? How shall I parry positions that are consonant with the principles of my own heart? For, indeed, 'tis certain that a faithless wife is the shame of her whole sex, and to pardon her is in fact to share her shame. Yet a wife like Eulalia, seduced at the immature age of fifteen, may, after so long, so severe, and so true a repentance, justly claim an exemption from a general law. The world will not regard it.—The world! he must fly from it, renounce it for ever. What is the world in comparison with Eulalia? She reigns still in his heart; and on that depend all my hopes of success.

S C E N E VI.

JOHN, *with the two Children* (WILLIAM and EMILIA),
MAJOR.

WILLIAM. I am very tired.

EMILIA. So am I.

WILLIAM. Are we still a great way from home?

JOHN. No, we are there now.

MAJOR. Stay; what children are those?

JOHN. The children of my master.

WILLIAM. Is that papa?

MAJOR. A thought strikes me. A word with you, friend. I know you love your master. Strange things have happened to-day.

JOHN. What things, Sir?

MAJOR. Your Master has found his wife again.

JOHN. Indeed! I am happy to hear it.

MAJOR. Mrs. Miller.

JOHN. Is she his wife? That makes me happier still.

MAJOR. But he intends to separate from her.

JOHN. Bless me!

MAJOR. We must endeavour to prevent it.

JOHN. Certainly.

MAJOR. The unexpected sight of these children may, perhaps, assist us.

JOHN. How shall we manage it?

MAJOR. Take them, and conceal them with you in yonder hut. Before a quarter of an hour has passed, you shall know more.

JOHN. But——

MAJOR. I beg you will not ask many questions; for time is precious.

JOHN. Well, well; asking questions, to be sure, is not exactly my business. Come children. [*Goes with them into Toby's hut.*]

MAJOR. Excellent thought! I promise myself much gratification from this innocent artifice. If the soft angelic look of the mother fail to penetrate, the sweet smiles and artless tongues of the children will surely find a way to his heart.

SCENE VII.

MEINAU, MAJOR.

MAJOR. I give you joy, Meinau!

MEINAU. Of what?

MAJOR. That you have found her again.

MEINAU. Show to the beggar a treasure that he once possessed, call him lucky, and give him joy on't. How silly !

MAJOR. And wherefore not, if the resumption of that treasure depend only on himself ?

MEINAU. I comprehend you. You are a messenger from my wife. It will not do.

MAJOR. How little do you know of your wife. Yes, I am sent by her ; but without any authority to treat of peace. She, who loves you to adoration, who without you neither can nor ever will be happy, she desires not your forgiveness, because—as she herself expressed it—you would be dishonoured by such a weakness.

MEINAU. Nonsense ! I am not to be caught.

MAJOR. Recollect yourself. She is an excellent wife.

MEINAU. Shall I tell you, my friend, how well this hangs together ? I have been here these four months. Eulalia knew it——

MAJOR. She know it ! She saw you this day for the first time.

MEINAU. She might make a fool believe that. Nay, more : she knew too, that I was not a man of the common sort ; that the high road, the direct path, was not the way to my heart ; therefore she devised an ingenious plan ; she played the benefactress ; but so managed the affair that I should be informed of every act. She played the pious, modest, reserved part, in order to raise my curiosity ; and now to-day she plays the prude. She rejects my supposed forgiveness, in order by that artificial generosity to extort the reality.

MAJOR. Meinau, you astonish me. Your pardon, my friend. Nonsense like this is only excusable in a man that has been so often deceived by the world. What pity it is now to overturn at once this fine superstructure of your fancy ! Your wife has declared most solemnly, that she would never accept your forgiveness, even if you should be weak enough to sacrifice your honour to your love. To what end then could she have formed that ingenious

genious plan to which you have alluded? Really, Meinau, a misanthrope alone could have harboured such a suspicion.

MEINAU. Then pray tell me the true reason of your present visit.

MAJOR. I have more than one reason. First, for myself, to conjure you, by the bond of friendship between fellow-soldiers, not to cast away this jewel from you; for, by Heaven, you will not meet with her equal.

MEINAU. You may spare yourself this trouble.

MAJOR. Surely, Meinau, you love her still.

MEINAU. Alas! I do.

MAJOR. Her sincere contrition has long since atoned for her guilt. What then should hinder you from being again as happy as you were before?

MEINAU. A wife who could once violate the marriage vow may be induced to a second breach of faith.

MAJOR. Not such a woman as Eulalia. Forgive me, Meinau, if I suggest that much of her fault recoils upon yourself.

MEINAU. On me!

MAJOR. On you, my friend. Who could have advised you to marry a young inexperienced girl? One scarcely expects to find fixed principles in a man of five-and-twenty; and yet you seem to have looked for them in a girl of fifteen. But setting that aside: she has erred, and she has suffered for her error. Her life for these three years past has been so blameless, that the microscopic eye of scandal has not discovered a speck in her conduct.

MEINAU. Were I even to believe all this—and I own I would willingly believe it—yet can she never be mine again! [*Bitterly.*] Ha! ha! ha! 'Twould indeed be a feast for the painted wenches and the idle butterflies of the court, to see me come among them again with my run-away wife lolling on my arm. How would they mock me, whisper to each other some bitter gibe upon me, point at me.—O, that would be worse than hell!

MAJOR.

MAJOR. But to abandon for ever that disgusting circle of vanity and folly would not, I should hope, cost my friend Meinau one sigh. He who, during three years, found himself sufficient for himself could not, I must think, hesitate to devote the remainder of his life to solitude in the arms of such a woman as Eulalia.

MEINAU. I perceive that you have laid a plan for conspiring with my heart against my head; but 'tis in vain. I entreat you, my friend, not to offer a word more on this subject; for I must leave you if you do.

MAJOR. Well then, as a friend I have discharged my duty. I now appear as the messenger of your wife. She requests a last interview with you, that she may take her leave. So poor a consolation it were cruel to deny her.

MEINAU. O! I understand that too. She flatters herself with a notion that my resolution may be shaken at the sight of her tears; but she is mistaken.—Well, she may come!

MAJOR. Ay, to make you feel and acknowledge how much you have mistaken her character. I'll conduct her hither. [Is going.]

MEINAU. One word, Horst.—Here, give her these jewels; they belong to her.

MAJOR. You will have an opportunity of doing that yourself. [Exit.]

S C E N E VIII.

MEINAU *solus.*

Well, Meinau, the last happy moment of thy life approaches. Thou wilt see her once more; her, who is thy life, thy soul, thy all! O that I could fly toward her, and press her to my palpitating heart!—Fye, fye! Is that the language of an injured husband? Ah! I feel that the phantom which we call honour is but in our heads, not in our hearts. [Firm.] It must be so. I will speak resolutely to her, but mildly; no reproaches shall escape my lips. Yes, her repentance is sincere; I cannot doubt it, notwithstanding some seeming contradictions.

Well,

Well, her existence shall at least be made tolerable. She shall not be compelled to get her living by servitude; she shall live independent; and beside have wherewithal to indulge her propensity to acts of benevolence. [*He looks forward, and, seeing Eulalia at a distance, is much agitated.*] Ah, they come. Offended pride awake! Injured honour protect me now!

S C E N E IX.

EULALIA, COUNTESS, MAJOR, MEINAU.

EULALIA. [*Who moves forward slowly, supported between the Countess and the Major.*] Allow me, Countess. I once had strength enough to sin. God will support the penitent now. [*She approaches Meinau, who with averted face awaits her address in great emotion.*] Meinau!

MEINAU. [*With a soft tremulous tone, and still averted face.*] What do you say, Eulalia?

EULALIA. [*Much moved.*] No, for heaven's sake! I was not prepared for that. That tone of kindness cuts me to the soul.—That Eulalia, that familiar friendly mode of address—No, generous man! a rigid, stern, untempered tone suits best the guilty ear.

MEINAU. [*Endeavouring to give his voice more firmness.*] Well, Madam.

EULALIA. Ah, if you would ease my heart, would condescend to use reproaches to me—

MEINAU. Reproaches! here they are; here in my palid cheeks; here in my sunken eyes, my meagre form. These reproaches I could not withhold from you. My tongue shall utter none.

EULALIA. Were I a hardened criminal, this forbearance might be gratifying to me; but I am a real penitent, and your generous silence sinks me to the earth. Ah! must I then myself declare my shame? It shall be so. There is no rest for me till my swollen heart has relieved itself by confession.

MEINAU. No confession, Madam! I know all, and dispense you from every kind of humiliation. I cannot

for

see you bent so low.—But you must be sensible, that after what has happened we must part for ever.

EULALIA. I know it. Neither did I come here to claim forgiveness: I dared not hope for it. There are crimes which doubly weigh on the criminal who can think that they should be pardoned. All that I venture to hope is, that from your own lips I may be assured you will not curse the remembrance of me.

MEINAU. [*Mildly.*] No, Eulalia, I will not curse you. Your love has in happier days afforded me so many sweet hours.—No, I will not curse you.

EULALIA. [*In great emotion.*] Fully sensible that I had become unworthy of your name, I have these three years past assumed another, under which I could not be known. You must have a letter of divorce, which will enable you to chuse a worthier wife, in whose arms may God dispense his choicest blessings on you. To that end this paper [*Takes out a folded paper.*] will be necessary. It contains a written confession of my crimes. [*She gives it him with a trembling hand.*]

MEINAU. [*Takes and tears it.*] Be it for ever cancelled! No, Eulalia, you alone have reigned within my heart, and—I am not ashamed to own it—you will reign there for ever. Your own sense of honour and virtue forbids you to take advantage of this weakness—But never could another wife be to me dear as Eulalia.

EULALIA. [*Tremulous.*] Well then, it only now remains for me to take my leave.

MEINAU. Stay; yet a moment stay. We have for some months lived very near together without knowing it. I have heard much good of you. You have a heart filled with sympathy for the misery of your poor fellow-creatures. I am glad of that. You must never want the means of obeying the dictates of such a heart; and above all, you must never know want yourself. This paper secures you an income of five hundred a year, which my banker will pay at such periods as may be most convenient to yourself.

EULALIA.

EULALIA. Never. The labour of my hands shall maintain me. A morsel of bread moistened with a repentant tear will more secure my peace, than the consciousness that I am idly battenning on the fortune of a man, whose honour I have polluted, and whose happiness I have destroyed.

MEINAU. Madam, take it, I beseech you.

EULALIA. I have deserved this humiliation. But to your generosity I appeal. Spare me this painful moment.

MEINAU. [*Aside.*] God, God! Of what a wife has that villain deprived me! [*Puts the paper in his pocket.*] Well, Madam! I respect your sentiments of delicacy, and withdraw my request; but on this condition only, that if ever you should require assistance, I may be the first and only person to whom you shall apply: ay, frankly apply.

EULALIA. I promise.

MEINAU. And now I may confidently entreat you to take back what is your own, your jewels. [*Tenders her*
[*a small case.*

EULALIA. [*Much moved, takes and opens it; her tears fall on it.*] Ah, to my weeping eyes this case recalls the evening on which you presented me with this brilliant knot. It was that very evening when my father joined our hands together, and when with rapture I pronounced the vow of endless faith. That vow is broken. At that time my heart was spotless as the new fallen snow. Alas! to that state no penitence can ever restore it. Of this necklace you made me a present on my birth-day five years ago. That was a happy day. You had arranged a small entertainment in the country; O how cheerful were we all together! This pin I received at the birth of my William. How heavily weighs the recollection of past joys by our own hands destroyed!—No; this casket of jewels I cannot accept, unless you wish to put into my possession a perpetual reproach. [*Takes out only the pin, and then returns the box.* Meinau, in as great emotion, but endeavouring to conceal it, takes the box with averted face, and puts it by.] The pin only I take as a memento of my William's birth.

MEINAU.

MEINAU. No; I can withstand no longer [*Turns toward her; his tone neither stern nor soft, neither firm nor tremulous, but fluctuating between all.*] Farewell!

EULALIA. O but one moment longer! An answer to yet one question more, to ease a mother's heart! Are my children yet alive?

MEINAU. They are.

EULALIA. And are they well?

MEINAU. And well.

EULALIA. God, receive a mother's thanks! My William, I imagine, must be grown pretty tall.

MEINAU. I believe he is.

EULALIA. And Emilia:—Is she still your favourite?
[*Meinau, greatly agitated by this scene, is struggling between the emotions of honour and love.*] O noble-minded generous man! allow me once to see my children before we part, that I may press them to my bosom, give them my blessing, and kiss the features of their father in them!
[*Meinau is silent.*] Ah, if you knew how, through these three dreary years, my heart has panted after my infants; how instantly my tears have burst from me whenever I saw a boy or girl of the same age with mine; how sometimes I have sat in darkness in my chamber, and solitarily indulged my mind with the magic pictures which fancy painted to my sight. Now on my lap sat William, now Emilia! Oh permit me to see them once, to take one last maternal embrace; and then we separate for ever.

MEINAU. You shall, Eulalia; and this very evening. I expect them every moment. They were brought up at the little town just by here. I have sent my servant for them, who might have been back ere this time. I give you my word, that as soon as they come I will send them to you; and they may stay with you, if you please, till the dawn of day to-morrow: then I take them with me. [*A pause.—The Countess and her brother, who, at a small distance in the back ground have witnessed the whole scene, exchange some significant glances. The Major goes into the hut, and soon after comes out with John and the two children. He gives the Boy to his Sister, who places herself behind*

behind Eulalia, while he stands with the Girl at the back of Meinau.

EULALIA. Then we have no more to say to each other in this world. [*Collecting all her resolution.*] Farewell thou noble man! [*Takes his hand.*] Forget an unfortunate woman, who will never forget you. [*Kneels.*] Allow me once more to press this hand to my lips, this hand that once was mine!

MEINAU. [*Raising her.*] No humiliation, Eulalia. [*He shakes her hand.*] Farewell!

EULALIA. For ever.

MEINAU. For ever!

EULALIA. We part without animosity.

MEINAU. Certainly, without animosity.

EULALIA. And when my sufferings shall have an end, when we shall meet again in another world—

MEINAU. There reigns no prejudice. Then you are mine again. [*Their hands are folded in each other's, their eyes meet, they stammer out once more a Farewell! and separate; but in going Eulalia turns on William, and Meinau on Emilia.*]

EMILIA. Father!

WILLIAM. Mother!

[*They press the children in their arms, in speechless rapture.*]

EMILIA. Dear Father!

WILLIAM. Dear Mother!

[*The Father and Mother quit the children, look on each other, open their arms, and embrace fervently.*]

MEINAU. I forgive you.

[*The Countess and the Major lift the children up, who cling to the necks of their Parents, and cry, Dear Father! Dear Mother!*]

[*The Curtain drops.*]

THE END.



be the mirror of your soul? Where is that open manly look that used to penetrate into every heart?

MEINAU. My look penetrate into every heart! [*Bitterly.*] Ha! ha! ha! [*Wildly.*]

MAJOR. I would rather never hear you laugh again than laugh in such a horrid tone as that! My excellent friend, what, in the name of God! has happened to you?

MEINAU. Oh, nothing strange. Incidents that happen every day in every street. — Horst! If you would not have me hate you, forbear to question me farther; if you would have me love you still, leave me.

MAJOR. Fye! how fortune, good or ill, can spoil men! Recall the faded ideas of past joys, that your heart may become warm again, and be sensible that a friend is near it. Remember the happy days we spent together in Alsace; not mingling in the mad enterprizes or senseless orgies of our fellow-warriors; no, those pleasing soft and solitary hours when, stealing from the noisy haunts of men, we arm in arm walked on the ramparts of Strasburg, or on the banks of the Rhine, where the beauties of nature opened our hearts, and filled them with the most grateful susceptibilities. In those halcyon days the bond of friendship united our souls. At that time it was that you gave me this ring as a pledge of your regard. Do you remember it still?

MEINAU. O yes, I do.

MAJOR. And have I since then become unworthy of your confidence.

MEINAU. No.

MAJOR. Our friendship was not of the common cast, formed by a frolick, a whim, or an accident; not in the drawing-room, nor at the convivial board alone was it experienced; no, hand in hand we braved danger even at the cannon's mouth among the batteries of Gibraltar. Charles! I am sorry to be compelled to assert in such a manner my claim to your confidence; but —

F

[*Taking*]

[*Taking off his hat, and pointing to a scar on his forehead.*] Know you this scar?

MEINAU. My friend! 'twas the effect of a stroke that would have cleft my head, but that you stepped in to my assistance, and rescued me with injury to yourself. You gave me life; but, alas! you do not know what a wretched gift it was.

MAJOR. Explain yourself, I beseech you.

MEINAU. If I should, you cannot relieve me.

MAJOR. But I may console you.

MEINAU. That I like not. Nor have I the poor relief of tears; 'tis long since from these eyes a tear was shed.

MAJOR. Then give me words instead of tears. Either will ease the heart.

MEINAU. My heart is like a long-closed sepulchre. Suffer then to moulder what was buried there. Why open the charnel-house again, and pollute the air with its pestilential vapour?

MAJOR. No, by "cleansing the stuffed bosom of the "perilous stuff that weighs upon the heart*," we will restore vigour and health to the whole frame. Why how you look! for shame. A man of your understanding, of your talents, one who always used to practise the philosophy he was formed to teach; and to be now so bent down by the hand of fate! If you have been persecuted by villains, or bubbled by rogues, let it pass. If, indeed, you had been in chains for years, I could forgive you.

MEINAU. Horst, you wrong me. Though I thought that I had arrived at a state of perfect indifference as to any thing that men might say of me, yet now I feel it is not so. The friend shall not quit the shadow of his former friend without being made acquainted with the means by which fate has deprived him of every joy of life. Ah, my misfortunes may be told in very few words. From the moment that I quitted the French service, and left you, my dear Horst! fortune turned

* Shakspeare.

against me. When my native country called me, what charming pictures did fancy paint to my sight! I laid down for myself a plan of life; saw myself in imagination improving on old customs, and correcting inveterate errors. O! let no one be rash enough to attack the follies of men, if he regard his own peace of mind. I was teased, persecuted, and pronounced a dangerous man. "Wit he has," they would say, "but a bad heart." This provoked me. I then became silent, found no more fault, approved of every thing, and courted the confidence of every man; but this was all in vain. It could not be forgotten, that I had once pretended to be wiser than they. I then renounced all society, sought for happiness only within myself, and lived retired, though in the midst of the town. I was made a lieutenant-colonel, in order that I might spend my fortune within the country. I did my duty with zeal and fidelity, without desiring to rise, or affecting distinction. My colonel died. There were at the time a number of lieutenant-colonels who had served longer than myself. I of course expected to see one of them promoted, which would have given me no discontent. But observe! the Prince had a mistress, who had an uncle, a silly conceited fellow, that had worn the uniform about six months. Well, Sir, he became my colonel. In consequence of this I asked my dismissal, and obtained it. Some honest remarks on the convenient influence of the lady made me a prisoner; and I existed half a year in a place where my only amusement or employment was biting my nails. Restored to liberty, I realized my whole property, and left the country. I now fancied myself so well fore-armed with a knowledge of mankind, that I need not fear to mingle again among men. I chose Cassel for my residence: every thing went on well. I found friends who flattered and cajoled me, who drank my wine, and borrowed my money. At last too I found a wife, a handsome, faultless creature not quite fifteen years of age. O! how I loved her. Yes,

at that time I *was* happy. She brought me a son and a daughter, both gifted by nature with their mother's beauty. How exquisitely I loved my wife and children! Yes; I was then supremely happy! [*Wipes a tear from his eyes.*] Look! a tear, as I live! I could not have thought it. Welcome, welcome to me, my old friend: 'tis very long since we met before. [*Contemplating the tear on his hand.*] Well, Horst! my history will soon be finished. One of my friends, whom I took for a very honest man, cheated me out of the greater part of my fortune. I bore that, and reduced my establishment. Content requires but few superfluities. Another friend came, a youth whom my bounty and interest had raised, and in whom I had great confidence. That youth seduced my wife, and carried her off — Will this excuse my hatred of mankind? will this account for my seclusion from the world? Do you still think me a humourist, who fancied persecution when nobody thought of him? or do you view me as the victim of villainy? A monarch can only inflict chains or death. Ah, my God! what are chains or death when compared with the infidelity of a beloved wife?

MAJOR. One who was not deserving of you. Fye! Meinau. 'Tis folly enough for a man to torment himself about a *good* wife; but to shed a single tear for a faithless one is a degree of madness.

MEINAU. Call it what you please; say whatever you will. My mind defies reasoning; for, ah! I love her still.

MAJOR. And where is she now?

MEINAU. That I know not; nor indeed do I wish to know.

MAJOR. Where are your children?

MEINAU. I left them at a small place not far from hence, with an old widow, who, perhaps, may be honest, for she is stupid enough.

MAJOR. Another spice of misanthropy! But why did you not keep your children with you? Their prattling would have beguiled many a melancholy hour.

MEINAU.

MEINAU. What, keep them with me, to have daily called to my mind, by their likeness to my wife, the hours of bliss I once enjoyed, and to have madded me by the contrast! No; I have not seen them these three years. I do not wish to have a human creature about me, child or old man; the child is growing up to be a rascal, and the grey-headed man is a consummate rogue. If the prejudices of our education did not make it necessary to have a servant, I should have discharged mine long ago, though, in truth, he is not one of the worst among the bad.

MAJOR. These are the consequences of marrying a woman of fashion, who has been taught from her childhood to laugh at the rigid precepts of virtue; for which reason, Meinau, you see me resolved on marrying a woman of plebeian rank.

MEINAU. You marry, Ha! ha! ha!

MAJOR. Nay, you shall see her. Come with me; our family anxiously desire to greet you.

MEINAU. I go among men again! I thought I had sufficiently explained myself on that head.

MAJOR. I own that you have been explicit; but I solemnly assure you, that if you continue to refuse this pressing invitation to sup with my brother, you will severely wound his sensibility. To do a favour without requiring thanks is noble; but purposely to go out of the way, and obstinately decline those thanks, is to make the benefit you have conferred an intolerable burden, and to expose yourself to the suspicion of affectation.

MEINAU. Is that stroke aimed at me?

MAJOR. I would willingly believe it not to be your case, for I think I know you better. But pray consider how my family may judge, who know you not. There are many excellent maxims in the world, that will not bear to be pushed too far in practice; such as will at first raise admiration, afterwards occasion vexation, and at last, perhaps, induce contempt or hatred.

MEINAU. My friend, there are also many maxims in the world, that may be easier preached than practised. If

you knew how disgusting every human face is become in my sight; that I would prefer sitting on thorns in a solitude, than on a sofa in your polite circles; that it sours my best humour for a whole day, if I but see a man coming toward me, and cannot get out of his way without making him a compliment of ceremony; if you knew this, you would cease to importune me. Leave me to myself, pray leave me. Every man endeavours to form about himself a suitable circle, of which he is himself the center. So I. As long as there remains a bird in this solitude to warble a salute to the morn, I shall not want for company.

MAJOR. To-morrow, and after to-morrow, you shall be left to do as you please. Only come this evening, and drink a glass of wine with me.

MEINAU. [*Firmly.*] No. I will not.

MAJOR. Nor would you, I may suppose, though by so simple a compliance you could secure the happiness of your friend.

MEINAU. [*Hesitating.*] Why—yes—then I—But let me hear.

MAJOR. You shall negotiate this match between me and Mrs. Miller.

MEINAU. I! My good Horst, if I ever had talents for such an office, they are long since rusted and perished.

MAJOR. Do not think so. Meinau, I love most seriously, and 'tis a love that will stand the test, for 'tis founded on esteem. She is an excellent woman, and when I am with her, I can speak to her on any subject but that of my love; for there is a something in her manner that chains my tongue when I would mention love. My sister, it is true, undertook my cause, but she does little good in it; her praise may appear the effect of a natural partiality, your's the contrary! A rigid face like your's will obtain much more credit. If you, my friend, would blazon a little my few good qualities——

MEINAU. See in your own person the man that would deceive! Fye!

MAJOR.

MAJOR. Well, I am vain enough to think that she would not be unhappy with me; and I beseech you, Meinau—my whole welfare depends on it. I will procure you an opportunity to speak with her alone. Will you?

MEINAU. [*After a pause.*] I will—But upon one condition.

MAJOR. Propose it.

MEINAU. That you will not attempt to dissuade my departure from this place to-morrow.

MAJOR. Departure! Whither?

MEINAU. Wherever it pleases God. To some land where no one knows me.

MAJOR. Obstinate man!

MEINAU. Do you promise? I will not come at all unless you do.

MAJOR. Well then I promise. Perhaps your own ideas may be changed by sun-rise. [*Offers his hand.*] Follow me!

MEINAU. I must make a trivial change in my dress, however.

MAJOR. Then we shall expect you in half an hour. You have given me your word.

MEINAU. I have.

MAJOR. Adieu!

[*Exit.*]

MEINAU. [*Walks several times to and fro; his looks sad, his head reclined; at last he stops, and calls*] John!

JOHN, MEINAU.

S C E N E III.

JOHN. Sir!

MEINAU. To-morrow we depart.

JOHN. Well.

MEINAU. Perhaps to another country.

JOHN. Very well.

MEINAU. Perhaps to another climate.

JOHN. All very well.

MEINAU. Ye happy islanders of the South Sea, to you will I come. Your minds are still unsophisticated; your single crime is theft. Never mind; I bring no treasure with me. The most precious jewel that I had, my peace of mind, has been stolen from me in Europe.—Or to you, ye brave inhabitants of Bisnapore; to you, whose seducing picture Raynal so well has drawn—Or—nay, just where it pleases Heaven; only let me get away from this civilized, moral Hell.—Do you hear me, John? To-morrow, early.

JOHN. Very well.

MEINAU. But before we go I have a small commission for you. Go down the village, hire a carriage, and hasten to the small town in the neighbourhood; you can be back before sun-set. I will give you a letter to a certain widow there, with whom I am acquainted; with her you will find two children; they are mine.

JOHN. [*Astonished.*] Your children, Sir?

MEINAU. Bring them hither.

JOHN. Your children, Sir?

MEINAU. Yes, my children. Is there any thing incomprehensible in that?

JOHN. I easily comprehend, Sir, that you may have children; but it seems somewhat strange, that in the three years that I have lived in your service, I should never have heard one word about them till now.

MEINAU. To talk much about one's children is a folly.

JOHN. There is a difference between saying much and saying nothing at all. You was married then, Sir.

MEINAU. Don't tease me with unnecessary questions. Go, and get ready for our journey.

JOHN. Five minutes time will be sufficient. [*Exit.*]

MEINAU. I'll follow you.

S C E N E IV.

MEINAU *sola*.

Yes, I'll take them with me. I'll accustom myself to the sight of them. The innocent creatures shall not be poisoned by a false philanthropy, nor corrupted by a pension. Rather let them acquire a scanty support from day to day on some desert island by the use of the lance or of the bow; or, like the Hottentots, squat in a corner, and yawn at each other. Better to do nothing than do evil. Fool that I was, to suffer myself to be persuaded once more to mix among these baboons in human shape! What a ridiculous figure shall I make! and as a match-maker too! ha! ha! ha!—Well; having endured so many mortifications already, why should I refuse, when I may serve my friend, to write for his sake one dull hour more in the calendar of my life? [Exit.

S C E N E V.

[*A Room in the Castle.*]BETTY *sola*.

No, Countess. If you determine to shut yourself up here in the country, I am your very humble servant. I am not fitted for a country life. I have been educated in the great world. [*Yawns.*] Here have I been yawning these two hours; in short, I find it quite insupportable. Not even a smart valet here to gallant one a little. And then that Mrs. Miller, I am sure she would drive a girl of genteel birth and polite ideas into the jaundice.

S C E N E VI.

BITTERMAN, BETTY.

BITTERMAN. [*who heard the latter part of her soliloquy.*] The jaundice! O mercy forbid. Who has made you uneasy, my pretty Miss?

BETTY.

BETTY. [*With contempt.*] Me, Mr. Bitterman! I assure you, Sir, I am not a person that would be made uneasy by any one in the world; for, though certain folks, whom I don't think it worth while to name, behave insolently to certain folks, whose shoes they are not worthy to unbuckle, I have been too well educated to be in the least hurt or affected by it.

BITTERMAN. But, fair Miss, you were speaking of being driven into the jaundice.

BETTY. Why yes, I was pitying that Mrs. Miller, who, having really a tolerable figure, is so injured in her appearance by a yellow complexion.

BITTERMAN. O Lord, why there are yellow, black, and brown people in the world. It is not long since I had letters from the Cape of Good Hope, that informed me of this curious fact; and if Mrs. Miller is yellow, perhaps it is the fashion in her country.

BETTY. Dear Mr. Bitterman! In her country did you say? Then you can tell me who this creature is; and whether, with regard to birth and family, she dare to put herself on a footing with certain folks.

BITTERMAN. No, honourable Miss, I have received no letters on that subject, neither from Europe nor any other part of the world.

BETTY. If a turned-up nose be an infallible sign of a good family, she may be a princess indeed.

BITTERMAN. To hear her speak sometimes, one might really suppose her some right honourable lady.

BETTY. But who is it that has turned her brain? Is it not the Count and his lady? How did the Count degrade himself to-day. He had hardly entered the room (I was in the anti-chamber) than up he ran to Mrs. Miller, and embraced her just as if, forsooth, she had been his equal.

BITTERMAN. Yes, I was a witness of that.

BETTY. The Countess too. This woman dines with her Grace, walks with her, and is at this very moment sitting among the family at the tea-table.

BITTERMAN.

BITTERMAN. 'Tis too true.

BETTY. Is that supporting the dignity of a Noble?

BITTERMAN. Surely not.

BETTY. A Count should always support a certain hauteur, a noble self-sufficiency and importance in all his actions.

BITTERMAN. Ay surely, surely.

BETTY. But this familiarity of his—Lord, it is just as if I, the daughter of the Prince's state coachman, should make myself a companion with the peasants of this paltry village.

BITTERMAN. Mercy forbid!

BETTY. No. I am determined not to put up with it. To-morrow morning, when I dress the Countess, I shall tell her my mind, I assure you. One of us two must quit the house, either I or Mrs. Miller; that's flat.

BITTERMAN. [*Seeing the Major coming.*] H—sh!

S C E N E VII.

MAJOR. [*Who on entering heard Mrs. Miller mentioned.*] Were you not saying something about Mrs. Miller?

BITTERMAN. Yes—that is I — [*Confused.*]

MAJOR. Betty! Tell my sister that I wish to speak with her as soon as she has done tea.

BETTY. I will, Sir. [*Exit.*]

MAJOR. May I ask what was the subject of your conversation?

BITTERMAN. Oh, Sir, we talked of this and that and t'other.

MAJOR. One would be apt to suppose that there was some secret in it.

BITTERMAN. A secret! Heaven forbid! I should have had letters that—Oh no, it was all upon public topics.

MAJOR. Then there can be no difficulty in explaining the nature of it. I beg—

BITTERMAN.

BITTERMAN. You do me great honour, right honourable Major; great honour indeed! Well, our discourse began with a few common-place remarks: the young lady asserted, that every one had their faults, and I said yes. Soon after I observed, that the best in the world were not without their foibles, and then Miss said yes.

MAJOR. If this be an introduction to the faults and foibles of Mrs. Miller, I am very desirous of hearing more.

BITTERMAN. O dear me! Mrs. Miller may be a very good woman; but she is very far from being an angel. As an old and honest servant in this house, it is my duty to apprise my master and mistress of every circumstance that may in any degree impair the revenues, or be disadvantageous to the welfare thereof.

MAJOR. [*Curious.*] Well, proceed.

BITTERMAN. The Count, for example now, will think that he has at least forty or fifty bottles of old hock in the cellar. But my service to him, hardly ten or fifteen remain. Not a drop of it has been tipped over my tongue, not even so much as a glass on great holidays.

MAJOR. [*Smiling.*] Mrs. Miller, I suppose, has not drank it.

BITTERMAN. Not herself, I believe; for she drinks no wine. But when any body in the village is sick, who would be highly gratified by a dram, she sends them immediately a bottle of old hock. I have many times warned her against this practice; but she always answers me very short with, "I will be answerable."

MAJOR. So will I, Mr. Bitterman.

BITTERMAN. O dear, Sir. It is nothing to me. To be sure, when I had the care of the cellar, as I had for twenty years, not one drop did the poor ever get from me. I was careful, Sir—and then what she thus wastes with one hand, she endeavours to scrape together with the other by improper savings, and ill-timed œconomy. Why there was last autumn, when I received letters from Hungary, informing me of the siege of Novi by the field marshal

marshal Laudohn, I, as a member of the Holy Roman Empire, wished to manifest my joy at the event. I asked the clergyman and the steward to take share of a couple of bottles of wine with me—Now mark, right honourable Major—what does Mrs. Miller do, but puts me off with common port.

MAJOR. That was hard.

BITTERMAN. One really does not know what to make of the woman. The company of the clergyman's and steward's wives is not good enough for her; and yet she will sometimes associate with the women in the village. She and I indeed agree pretty tolerably together; for, between you and me, Sir, she has cast a loving eye upon my Peter.

MAJOR. Ay! ay!

BITTERMAN. Ah, that Peter is an ingenious clever lad. He learns to write of our parish clerk. If your honour would like to see a specimen of his talents—he shapes his letters very handsomely——

MAJOR. Another time, good Mr. Bitterman. At present I must be excused, and bid you good morning. [*Bitterman bows, without offering to go. The Major turns over the leaves of a book which lies on a table.*] I have found here a very interesting volume, and I don't think that I shall soon leave it. Good morning to you.

BITTERMAN. [*Not taking the hint.*] Your most obedient servant, Major.

MAJOR. [*Aside.*] Why this is extremely amusing. Mr. Bitterman [*to him*] I wish to be alone.

BITTERMAN. Your honour has only to command. But if you should find the time hang heavy on your hands, or should wish for any information respecting the latest news from the seat of war, you have only to send for me. I have letters——

MAJOR. Very well.

BITTERMAN. [*Going, with many bows.*] Letters from Brabant, letters from the Turkish frontiers, letters from Russia, letters from the pacha of Scutari. —

[*Exit.*
MAJOR.

MAJOR. Insufferable prater ! Yet not so. He spoke of Mrs. Miller, and therefore I can pardon his political rant.

S C E N E VIII.

COUNTESS, MAJOR.

COUNTESS. Your people in love really seem to think that others have neither hunger nor thirst, because they themselves live upon the fragrant effluvia of roses, and the pabulum of moonshine. Scarcely have I drank off two cups of tea, when my brother sends for me away from table. What commands have you for me ?

MAJOR. Ah, sister, can you ask that question ? Have you spoken with Mrs. Miller ?

COUNTESS. Yes.

MAJOR. Well.

COUNTESS. Nothing.

MAJOR. Nothing !

COUNTESS. In plain words, if the Major do not look out soon for another harbour, he will be compelled to toss about on the open ocean for the rest of his life.

MAJOR. Is she married ?

COUNTESS. That I do not know.

MAJOR. Is she a woman of any family ?

COUNTESS. That is more than I dare to say.

MAJOR. Perhaps she does not like me.

COUNTESS. That point I cannot answer now.

MAJOR. Well, I cannot but admire your sisterly affection ; it is exemplary. However, 'tis well that I did not place too much reliance on it in the outset. It is fortunate for me, that I have met with a friend, whose kindness and zeal in my cause will make a sister blush.

COUNTESS. A friend !

MAJOR. At your service, Madam. The Stranger, who this morning saved the life of your husband, is my old and particular friend.

COUNTESS. Bless me ! What is his name ?

MAJOR. That I do not know.

COUNTESS. Is he of any family?

MAJOR. That is more than I dare to say.

COUNTESS. Will he come here this evening?

MAJOR. That point I cannot answer now.

COUNTESS. You are intolerable.

MAJOR. Can you object to a da capo of your own composition?

S C E N E. IX.

COUNT, EULALIA, COUNTESS, MAJOR.

COUNT. What in the name of wonder, Countess, do you take me for? an Anchorite! You are always leaving me alone with Mrs. Miller, without ever seeming to consider that my heart is not made of stone. I give you fair warning, my Lady, if this ever happens again, I have a declaration of love in petto.

COUNTESS. Drawn up by your valet, I suppose.

COUNT. No, Madam, borrowed from one of your intercepted love letters.

COUNTESS. Still borrowed, nevertheless.

COUNT. By no means; copied from a billet-doux which you received from me six years ago.

COUNTESS. How economical! And so you will make use of that a second time? What, cannot you say something new?

COUNT. No, Madam! You have exhausted me.

COUNTESS. A very sad confession in the presence of your new mistress!

COUNT. The devil! I never shall be able to cope with her. Brother, how are you? Will the Stranger come?

MAJOR. I expect him every moment.

COUNT. I am glad of it! Once more then we shall have a little company. In the country one can hardly have too much.

MAJOR. Ay, but our circle will not be greatly enlarged

larged by this Stranger. He leaves the place to-morrow.

COUNT. Not he indeed. Now, Countess, is the time for you to summon up all your charms. There are no laurels to be acquired in a victory over a husband; he is too much accustomed to your sway; but such an extraordinary humourist as this is worthy of your valour. Then try your arm.

COUNTESS. Why, I confess, the conquest would be worth the trouble. But what Mrs. Miller has in four months been unable to effect, I may well despair of accomplishing.

EULALIA. Not so, Countess. [*Jocularly.*] He never gave me opportunity to try the power of *my* charms. Our communication, for these four months that he has been here, has been truly Platonic, for we have never once seen each other.

COUNT. Then he is a fool, and you are a goose.

BITTERMAN. [*Entering.*] The Stranger wishes to have the honour of waiting on your Grace.

COUNT. He is heartily welcome. Shew him in.

SCENE X.

[*MEINAU enters with a serious bow. The COUNT walks up to him with open arms. EULALIA sees him, and falls in a swoon. MEINAU casts a look on her, and, with astonishment and horror in his gesture and manner, runs suddenly out at the door. The COUNT looks after him with wonder. The COUNTESS and the MAJOR bear out EULALIA.*]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

